the most dangerous video game & comic 'zine

FLUX

ISSUE #4 • GRETCHEN RULES!

the real deal:

MORTAL KOMBAT 3

new characters, exclusive pix & the programmers talk

comics' hottest honeys

killer instinct

moves that work: complete strategy guide

nba jam te secret codes

neil gaiman . anime a-z . gen 13

barbi twins . destructive pranks

the girls of baywatch and much more .

the top 100 video games

EXPOSED! lady death, vampirella & shi

04 >
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#5

All is
mystery;
but he is
a slave
who will not
struggle
to penetrate
the dark
veil.

-Disraeli

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MK3. The Arcade Game. 04.15.1995. AD.
TM

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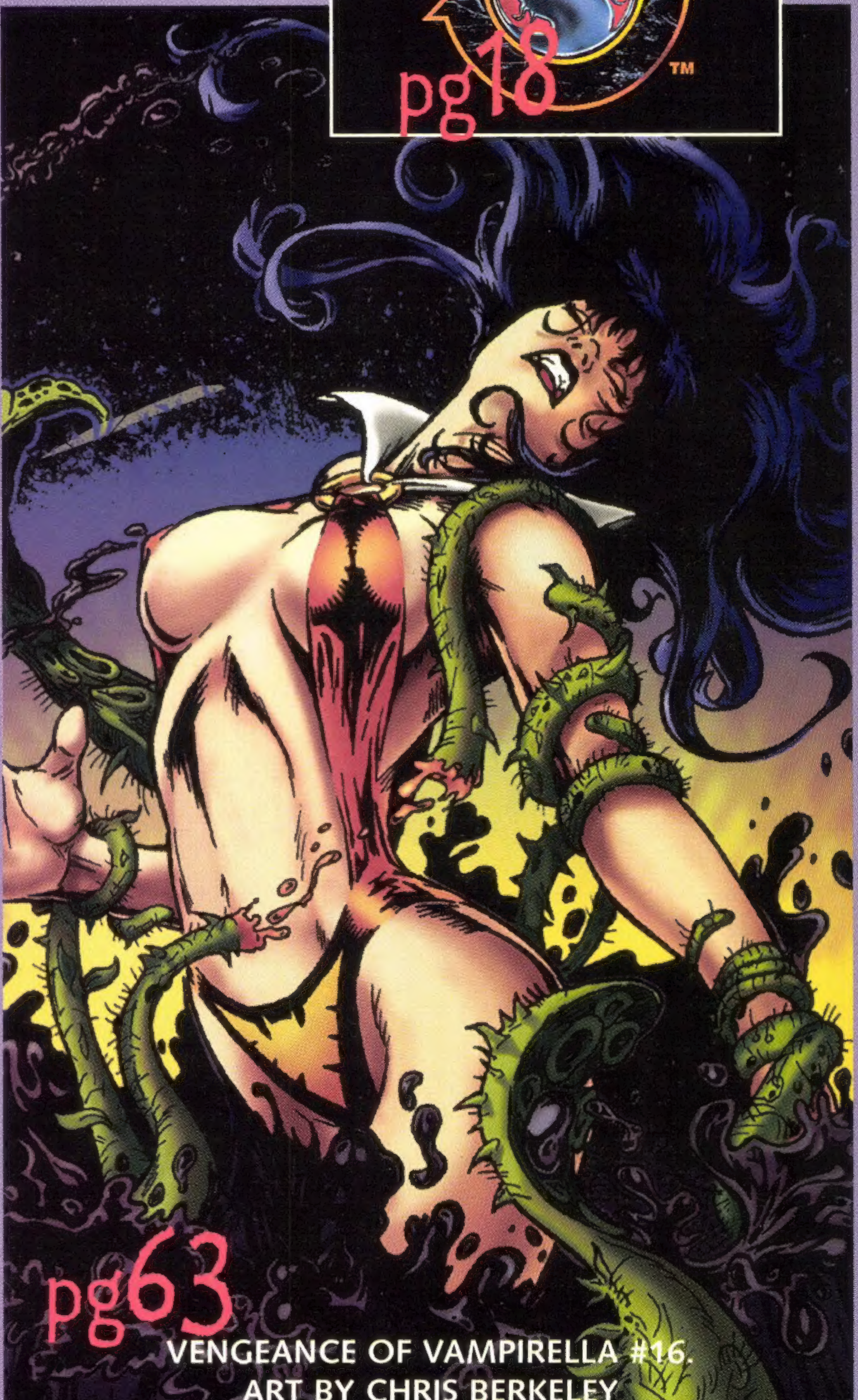

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VENGEANCE OF VAMPIRELLA #16.
ART BY CHRIS BERKELEY

Mortal Kombat III cover artwork by Buzz and colored by Andrew Aduan and Demetrius Bassoukos.
Lady Death, Vampirella and Shi cover artwork by Steven Hughes, Bill Tucci and Buzz, respectively. Colored by Kevin Horn.

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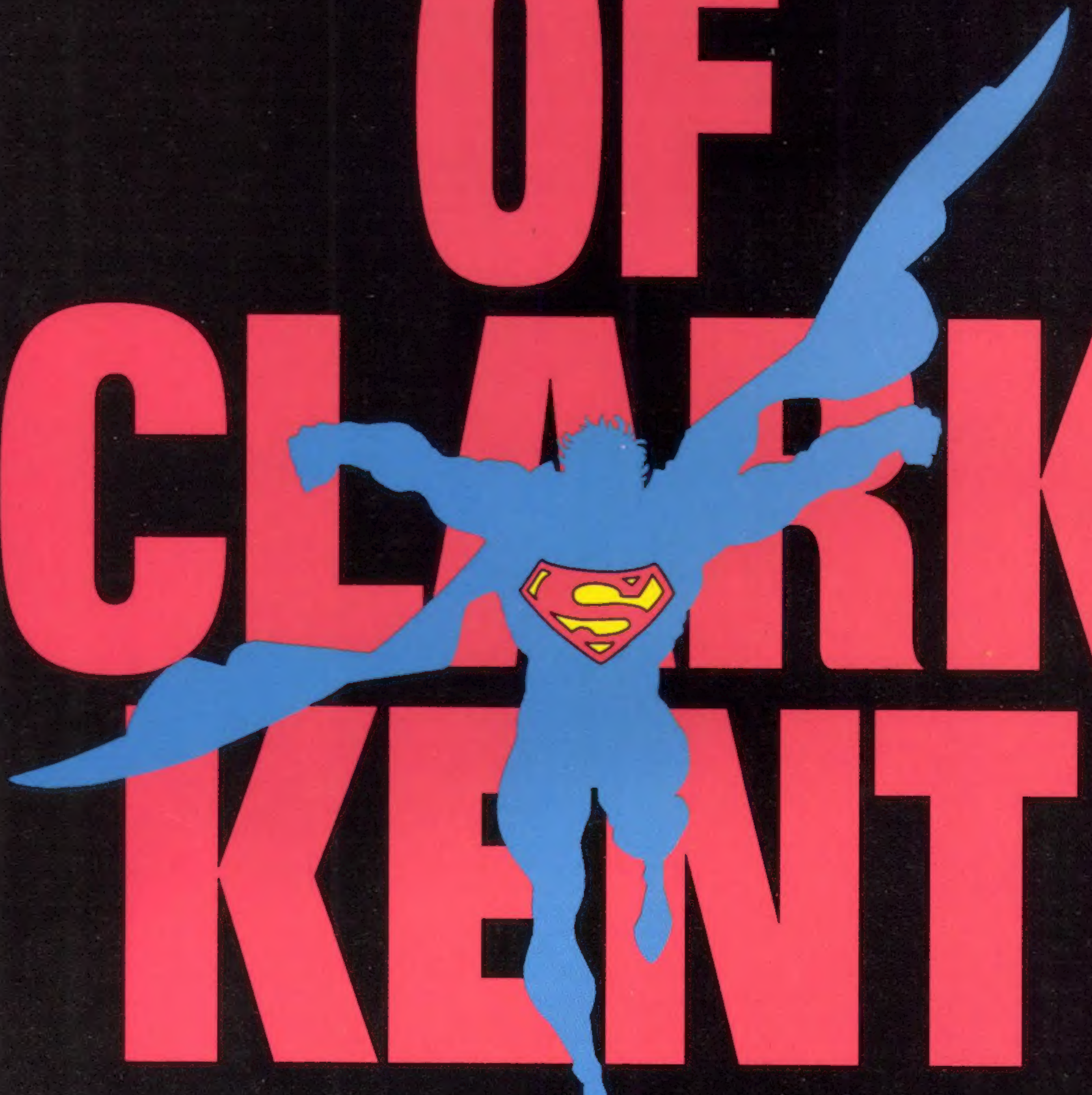
THE DEATH OF CLARK KENT



SMASHING BEYOND!

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JURGENS, BREEDING AND RUBINSTEIN

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systemerror

THE 1995 VIDEO GAME HARDWARE WARS—DON'T BELIEVE THE HYPE!

The hype is deafening—everybody and their little brother is bringing out a "next generation" game system later this year that's supposed to make you pee your pants with joy. Bigger numbers, faster clock speeds, more polygons, better shading, weirder controllers—just what the hell is going on, anyway? As you sadly pack away the 16-bit setup that you've poured tons of money into over the last three years, consider how many promises have been broken by these same companies in the past—Genesis VR glasses? SNES CD?—and take a look at the future that lies ahead....

3DO: First out of the gate with a 32-bit machine and therefore leading the pack. With about 150 software titles and a half-mil users worldwide, they've got a good head start. The M2 accelerator will give this machine true 64-bit muscle later this year, and *DOOM* and *Myst* are on the way. The price is finally reasonable, but knock off yet another $100, and we're talkin' a killer system well worth the dough.

SEGA 32X: It's supposedly got just a smidgen less power than the Saturn, but the first generation of software hasn't really flexed any of that muscle. *Star Wars Arcade* and *Virtua Racing Deluxe* just don't feel like the 32-bit experiences we've been promised. And by the time 32X programmers hit their stride and get this puppy hummin', it'll be totally eclipsed by another planet.

VIRTUAL BOY: Ow! My eyes! My *EYES!*

ATARI JAGUAR: It's hard to keep a system alive with less than a dozen titles on the market, but *AvP*, *DOOM* and *Tempest 2000* show that the Jag's not quite ready to be put to sleep yet. Plus, Atari's digging deep into the archives to pull out some of the arcade classics that fueled the 2600 and rework them for the Nineties. But a 64-bit processor? Try two 32-bit processors working in tandem—ie, a 32X—hardly the cat's meow. And they ask *us* to do the math?

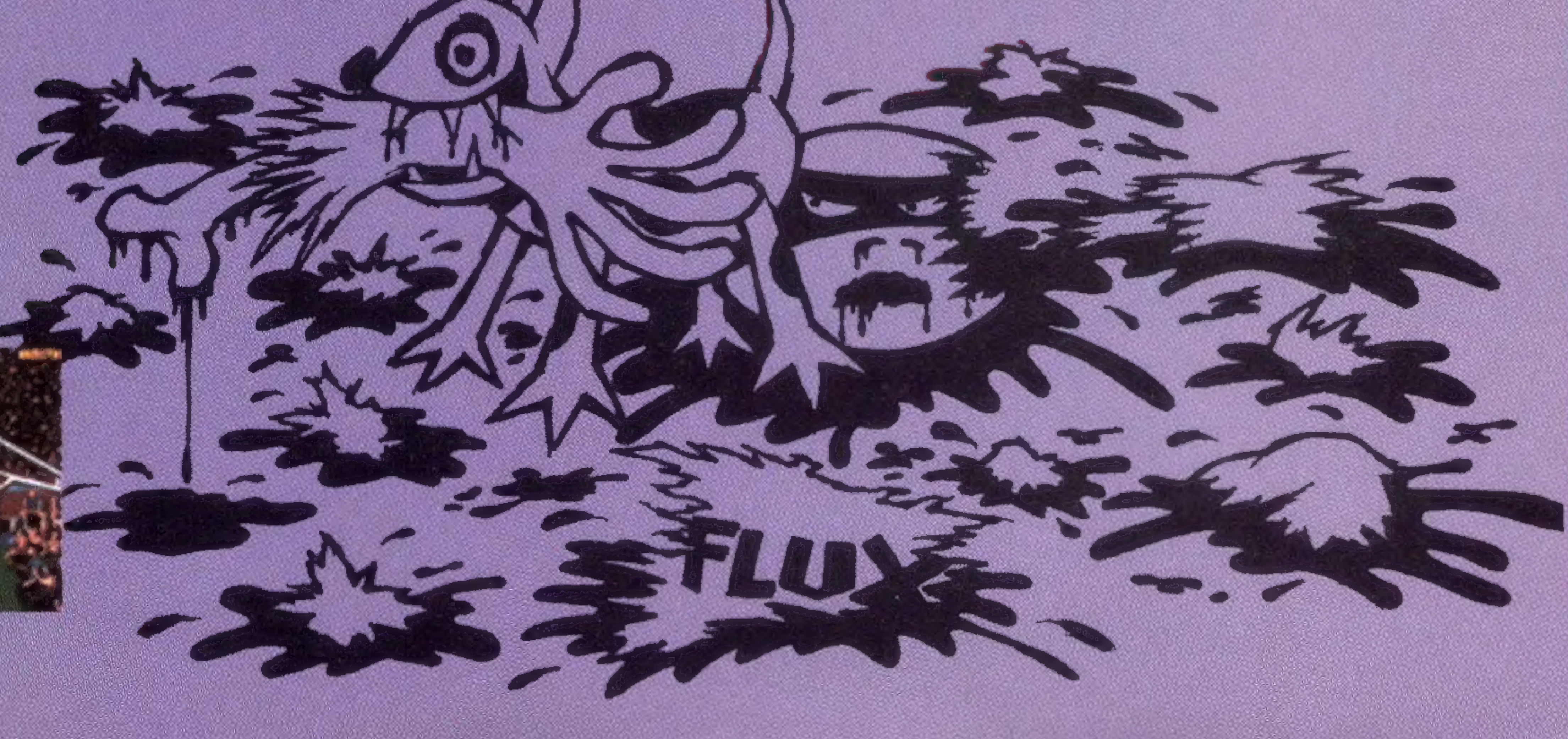
SONY PLAYSTATION: The industry's been buzzing about the PS since its announcement, but the public is only now catching on to the system's potential. Japanese sales are strong, the, uh, *two* games that we've seen look great, and rumors of *MKIII* being available in time for the machine's rollout seem to be gaining credibility. Then again, so do the rumors of a $450 price tag. And that controller...why not a standard D-pad instead of four individual directional buttons? So much for games that require diagonal or quarter-circle moves (*SFII*, cough cough)...

SEGA SATURN: A few overhauls later, the Saturn finally looks good to appear in the States by the end of the summer. It's a minor hit in Japan, fueled mostly by *Virtua Fighter*, but Sega CEO Tom Kalinske says it won't come to American soil until they figure out how to make it run Genesis and 32X software. Other sources at Sega say that's impossible—it was never part of the plan and it's too late to change it now. If they can get their bass-ackwards compatibility problem taken care of, they stand a good chance of keeping the bulk of Sonic fans on board—even with a $400+ price tag. Otherwise, a lot of Genesis gamers are gonna jump ship.

NINTENDO ULTRA 64: A true 64-bit machine promising unbelievable graphics at an unbelievably low price. Yeah, right. Nintendo *does* have the financial power to get this on the market for the promised $250, but expect to pay through the nose for the software. Insiders say *Killer Instinct* will be even better at home thanks to an advanced chip set, which has gamers treating Ultra like it's the only system out there—even though it's *not out there yet*. Show us a freakin' prototype already—not proto*hype*!

There are a few other flies in the ointment, but that's what it looks like to us for the coming year. It's your money they're after. Choose wisely.

—THE FLUX STAFF



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backlash

The blank report card was a great idea. How about a blank check for those of who wished they got paid more?
—Deviant@utxvms.cc.utexas.edu

I peed my pants when I read your last issue.
—Danny Robinson

Issue #3 is the first issue of FLUX I've read, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I love new magazines that aren't afraid to swear and cover the stories that really mean something to a comic/arcade fanatic. I can't wait for the *X-Men* fighting game to come out—it promises to be a hit.
—R. Kaiser

Regarding the "Appalled, astonished and angry purchaser" in issue #3, just because you think something sucks don't mean it's not good. Use your brain you idiot! When a magazine has Beavis And Butt-head, the most objectionable and appalling characters in public, on the cover and features the "10 Most Violent Video Games" [*issue #2*], it might bet offensive to a wimp like you. If you don't like FLUX, that's fine—but don't try to force your opinion on others! You know, first amendment and all that....
—Yeroc
Newtonsville, OH

FLUX rules! Anyone who thinks it sucks should be killed slowly and painfully. That "Appalled purchaser" sounds like a real wuss. I'll be his mom dresses him. If your mag showed naked chicks in "Babewatch," it would kick Playboy's ass!
—Matt Lee

FLUX is an awesome magazine. But you need more on music and comics.
—Nick Dime

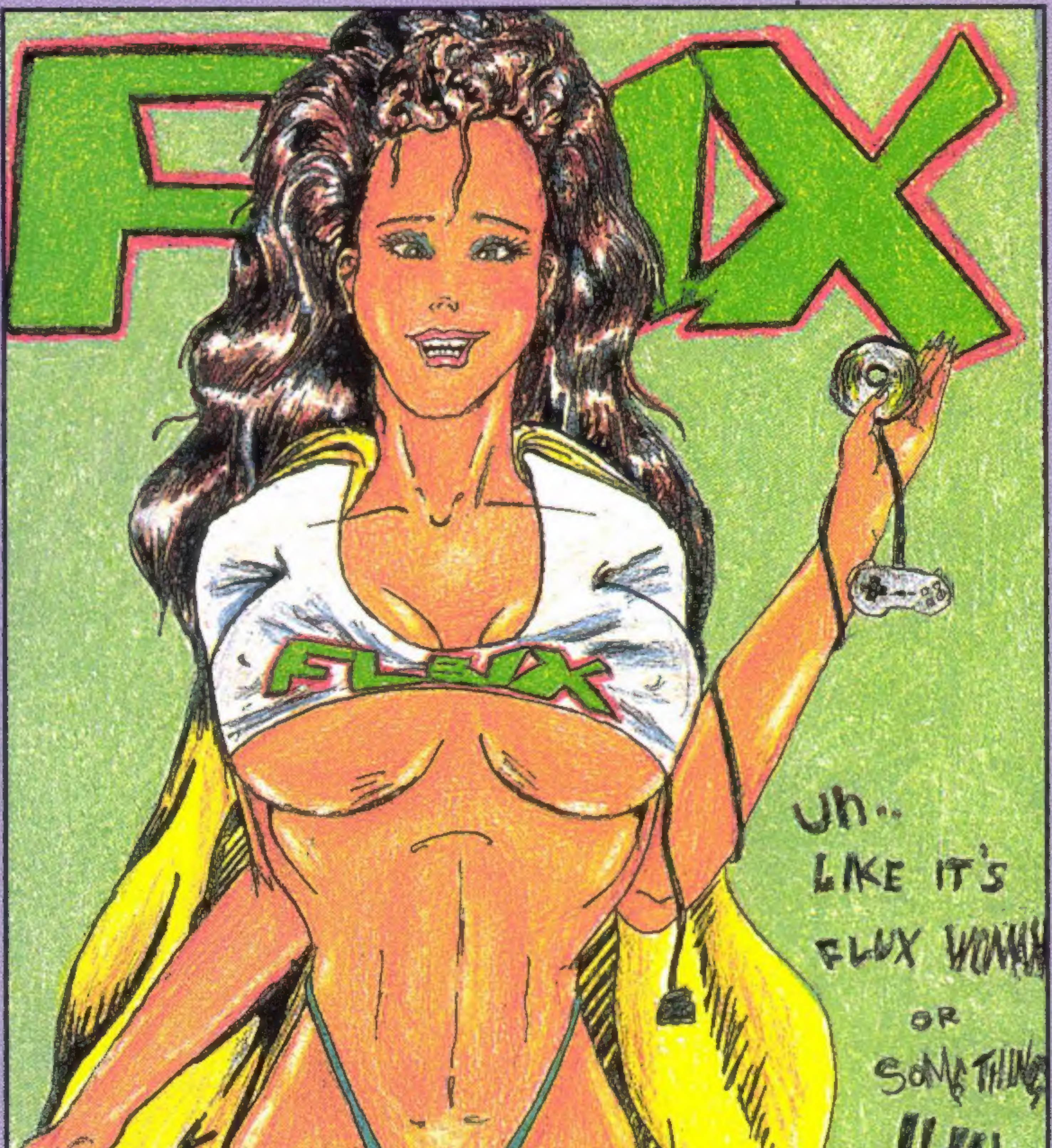
FLUX is the best all-around mag, but there was one thing in issue #3 that made me mad. You had a section called "Deth Metal," and you put Megadeth under it. They suck. How could you call them death metal? [*We didn't. It was just a headline.—Ed.*] Bands like Obituary, Cannibal Corpse, Entombed, Hell Hammer, Deicide, Bolt Thrower and Napalm Death are death metal bands—not weak ass Megadeth! What the hell is up with the name Megadeth, anyway? Couldn't they think up anything cooler than that?
—Adam Hyatt

I'll start by saying, "You guys kick ass!" To that chick in issue #3 who was offended by "Babewatch": if you don't like it, go back to reading YM! This is a "dude" mag, not some pansy-ass, politically-correct, butt-kissin' girl sycophant magazine!
—Mark Zedaker
akuma@powergrid.electriciti.com

In the first issue of FLUX, you printed a Stereogram, but didn't print the answer. Is this for real or is it a fake? My eyes hurt! Great mag—keep out the fashion!
—Fredzep@aol.com
[*The answer to the Stereogram in issue #1 of FLUX is...drum roll please...BOOGER! It's snot easy to see, but it's there.—Ed.*]

FLUX. Your mag is the coolest. It has everything a 15-year-old dude wants. Babes, games, comics, even music—all of my favorite stuff. Why buy four magazines when you can get it all in FLUX? You rock. All other mags suck.
—Knewdelz
Ports, VA

FLUX kicks EGM and Game Pro's ass! The Don't Ever Do This section has taught me some cool tricks, the Babewatch section makes me horny and the use of such words as &@%$ and !*&# rules!
—Chris Schaffart
Omaha, NE



Reader Art Of The Month

When I saw the 3rd issue of FLUX and the special *Mortal Kombat II* strategy section, I thought, "Not another one of these." I was wrong. I knew nothing of the "Test Modes" for Genesis or the Fergality for Rayden. It was just one more reason to buy FLUX. At least until Static has fashion!
—Matt Tophklan
Lawrence, KS

I'm glad FLUX isn't afraid to use swear words like them other wussy magazines.
—John Sullivan

Just one questions—why the hell did you name your mag FLUX? I mean, it's an okay name, but you could have thought up better names than that.
—Ben Dover
Ottawa, Ont., Canada

I just picked up a copy of FLUX, and I loved it. However, my mom hated it. She hated the use of bad language (which I liked) and the "Don't Ever Do This" stuff (which I also really liked). Anyway, I wanted to ask if I could have some free stuff. In return, I will persuade my mom to let me subscribe.
—Richard T.
Beaconsfield, Quebec, Canada

You have a really good magazine, but don't put any naked girls in the magazine. If you do decide to keep putting in girls, be sure to satisfy both sides by putting in nude guys, too.
—female FLUX reader

Your mag is the ruffest. This is my first time reading and I must say, you guys blew my mind, kicked my ass and left me begging for more.
—Terrence Tucker
Newark, DE

Yo, like nobody ever puts my letters in magazines and I'm sick of it. So if you put this letter in FLUX, you're even cooler, and if not, I'll kick your ass.
—Ernie Dixon

EGM and GP suck. FLUX rules and kicks everybody's ass. All other magazines can go to hell.
—A Deranged Psycho

Hello, my name is Alan Gerow. I am cool. When I got your premier issue over the summer, I thought it was awesome. I thought it couldn't be topped—but I was wrong. Issue 2 was 1,000,000,000,000 better! It rocked! When I picked up issue 3, the first thing I thought was, "What the hell happened?" It sucked! This issue was worse than the back cover of issue 1. What happened to Sicko? Why were all the "Don't Ever Do This" articles pushed to the back? Babewatch with no Pamela Anderson, Anna Nicole Smith or Rogue? Plus, you made the magazine look too pretty—and you supposedly don't care about fashion. You hypocrites. Where's that raw edge? FLUX is still cool, but issue 3 sucked.
—Alan Gerow
Richmond, VA

You guys don't give enough gusto to one of your prime eye-catchers: Babewatch! It's tightly crammed into a half page segment, as if you're trying to hide it from the feminists and other assorted sissy people. I envision five pages full of beautiful women. Otherwise, it's a cool mag that I'll keep buying.
—Big Phil

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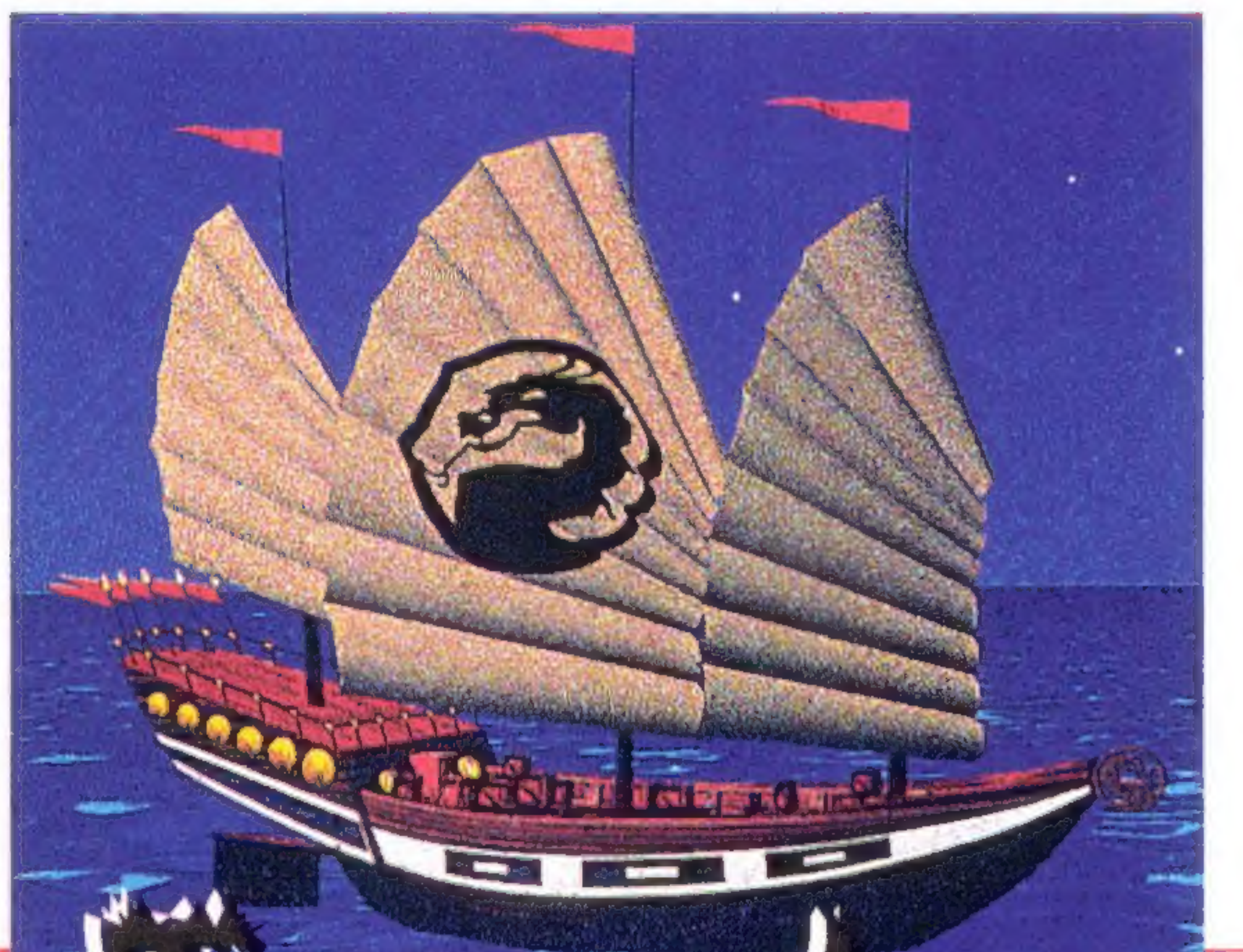
static

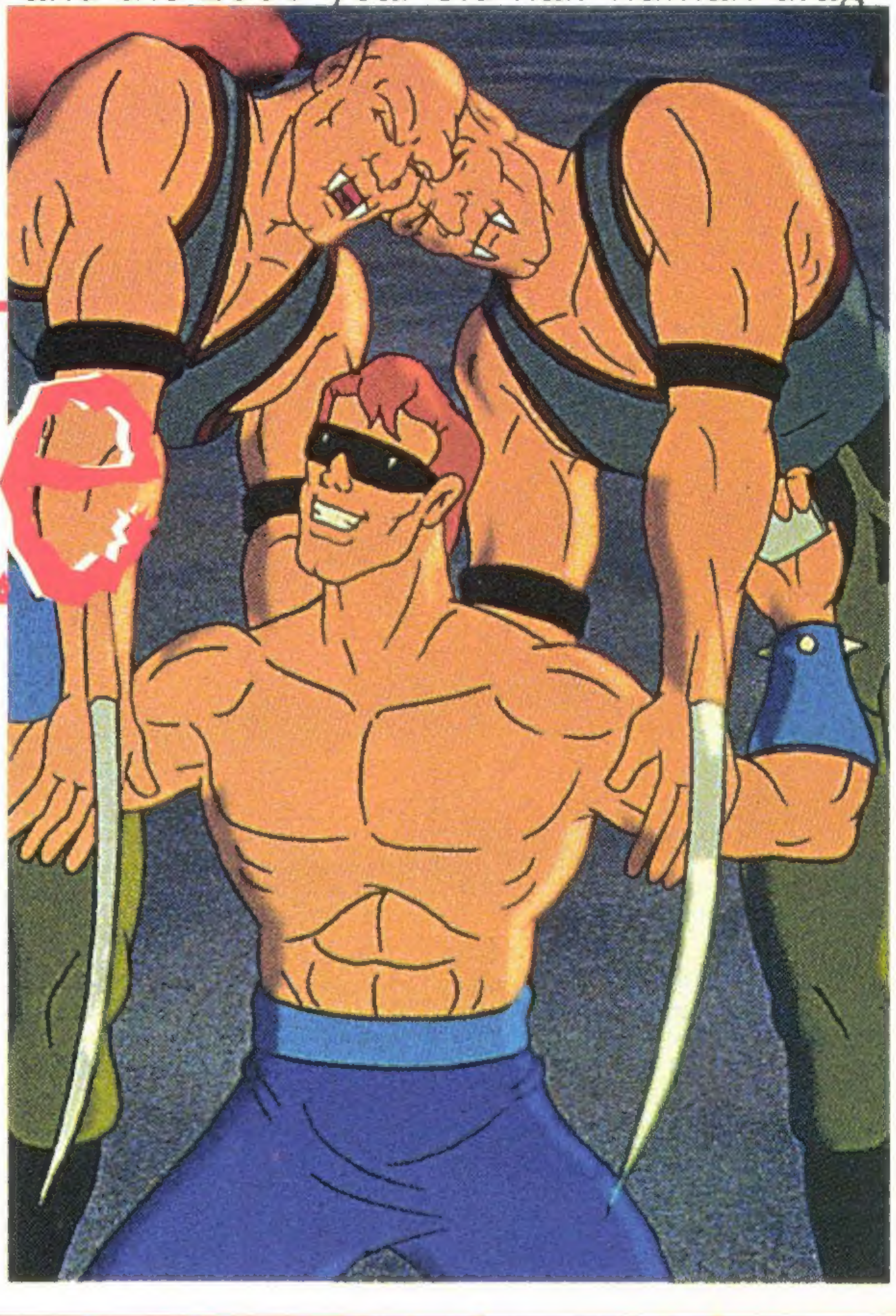
STUFF THAT DOESN'T SUCK

an inside look at Mortal Kombat—The animated Video



Can't wait until May to see Liu Kang, Johnny Cage, Sub-Zero and the rest of the *Mortal Kombat* gang kick each other's butts in a movie? Well, a trip to your local video store on April 11 might just do the trick, for on that day New Line Home Video plans to release *Mortal Kombat—The Animated Video*.

The film's plotline sees Sonya Blade, Johnny Cage and Liu Kang travel to a mysterious island to battle a demon sorcerer and the 2000-year-old half-human dragon, Goro, and two Outworld villains, Sub-Zero and Scorpion, in an ancient tournament that will decide the fate of the human race.

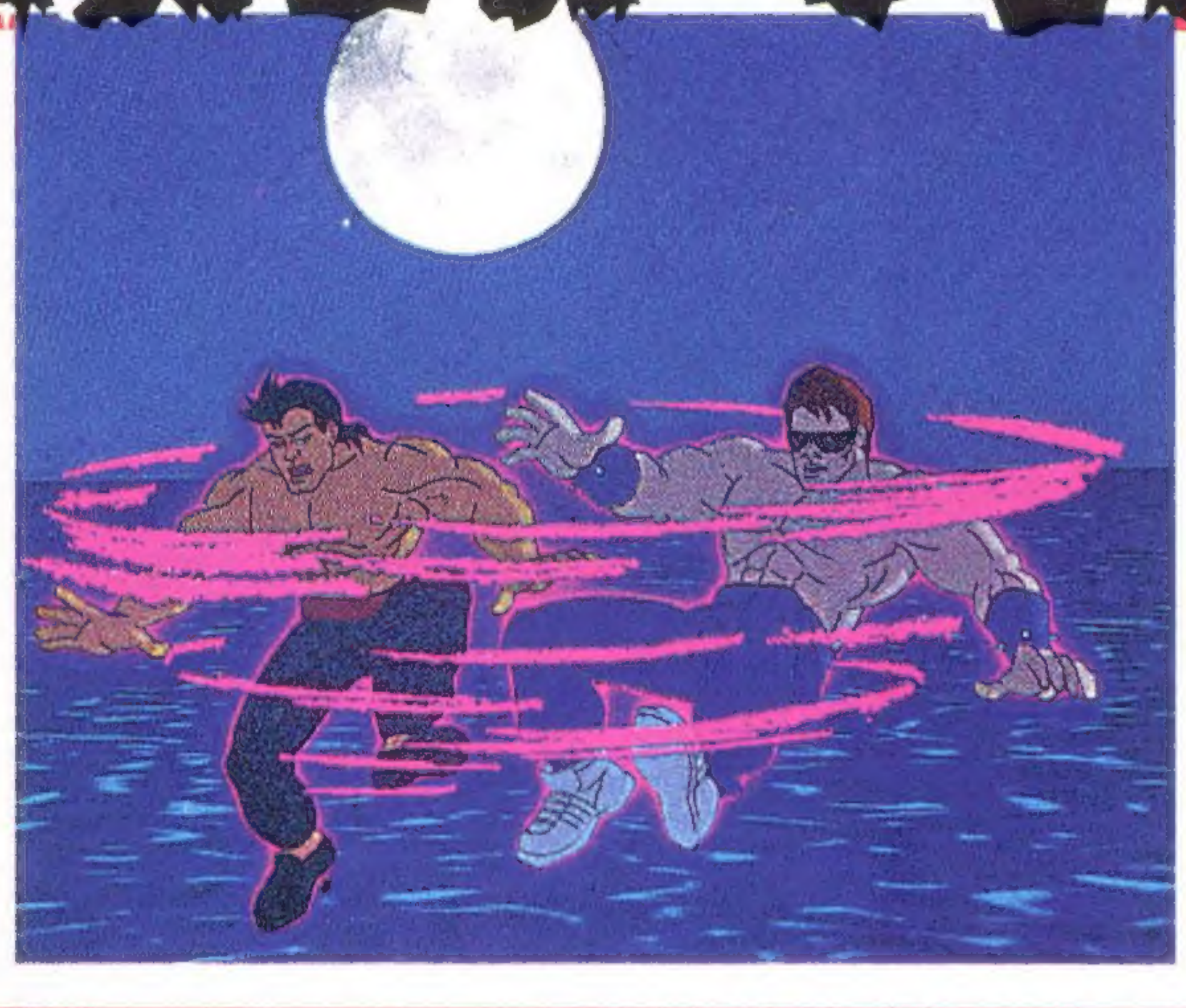


Mortal anime

According to Threshold Entertainment, producers of *Mortal Kombat—The Animated Video*, the techniques used to bring the *MK* clan to the animated screen are completely revolutionary. By utilizing Acclaim Entertainment's highly advanced Motion Capture Studio, the producers were able to film live actors in light suits and apply their movements to the 3-D computer-generated characters.

Mortal Kombat—The Animated Video will retail for $14.98.

Don't miss it!

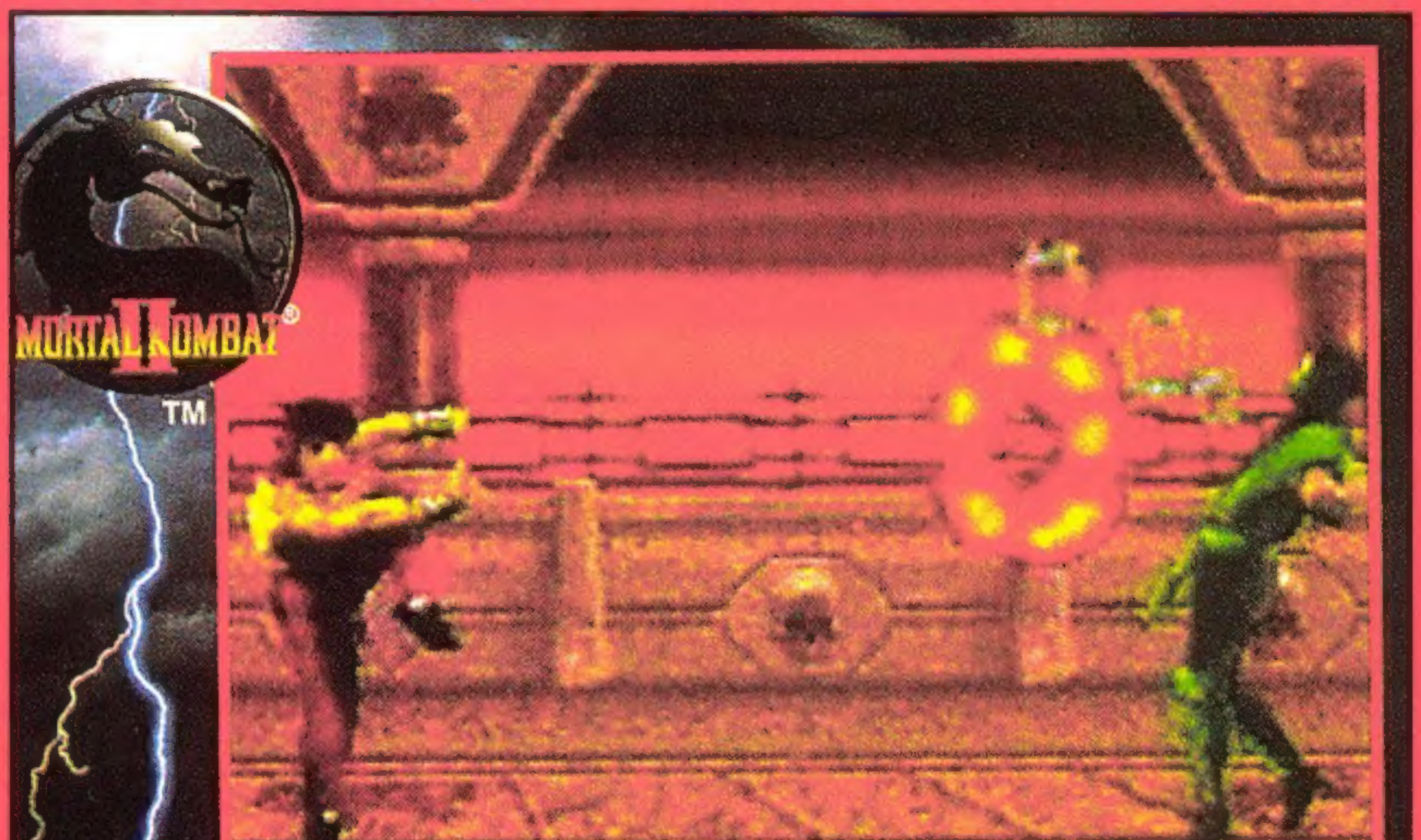


ROaD WaRRIORS

Van Halen and Pearl Jam won't be the only ones knockin' 'em dead in arenas this summer. "Mortal Kombat: The Live Tour" will visit over 100 cities, playing at such esteemed venues as The Forum in L.A. and Madison Square Garden, as well as international dates in Australia, Japan and Southeast Asia. The $10-a-ticket performance offers lasers, special effects, lotsa kicking and punching, the *real-life* Sub-Zero and, believe it or not, audience participation—from their seats, attendees get to vote on what happens on stage, a la *Love Connection*, and affect the show's final outcome. Only one detail remains: Will Kitana host a Fan Appreciation night?

—DAN AMRICH

BOGUS CARD OF THE MONTH



mortalmisprint

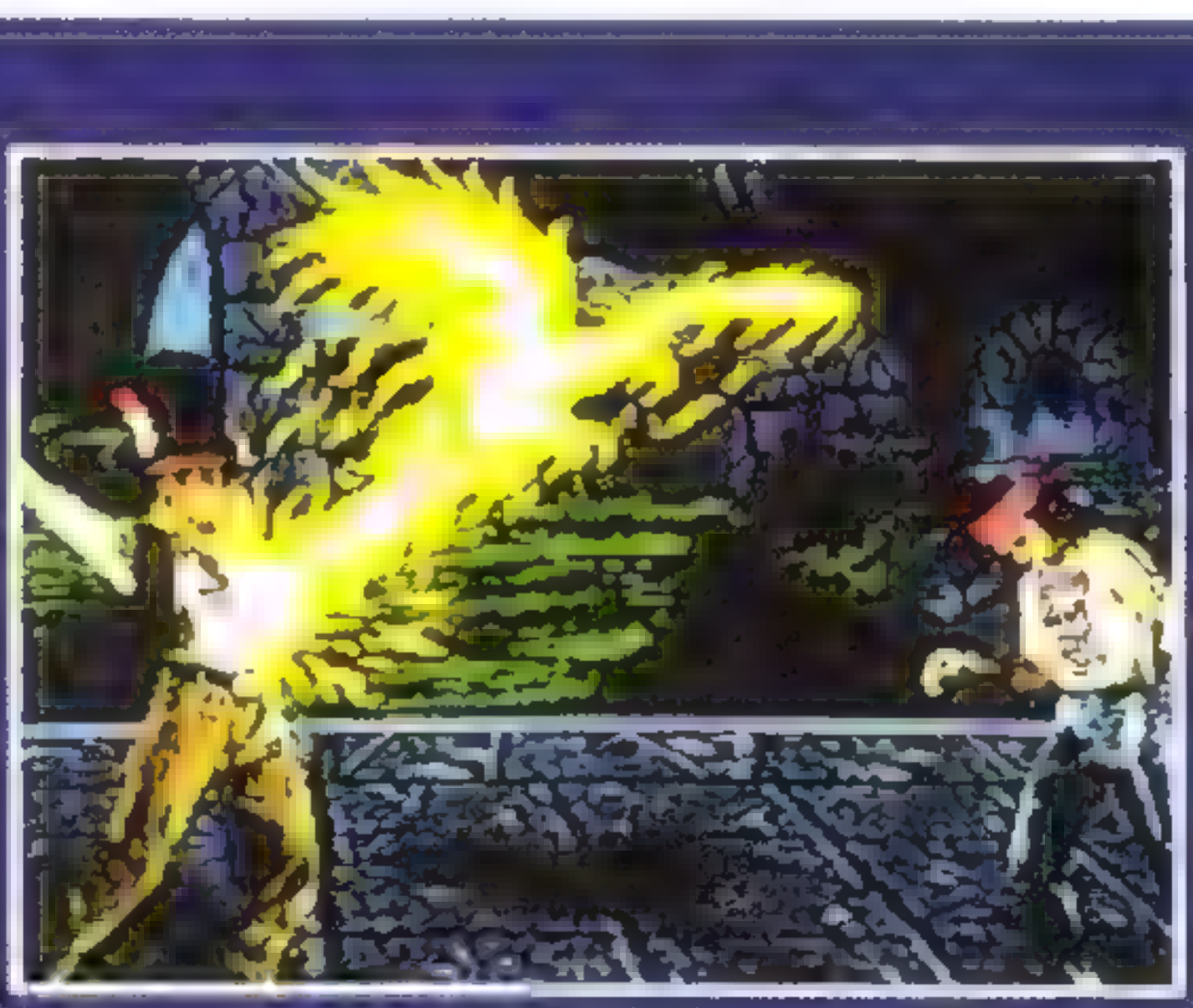
Johnny Cage? Don't think so. Try Liu Kang and Reptile! This erroneously-labeled card, which is card #10 in Classic Games' Mortal Kombat II series, was submitted by Chris Schaffart of Omaha, NE.

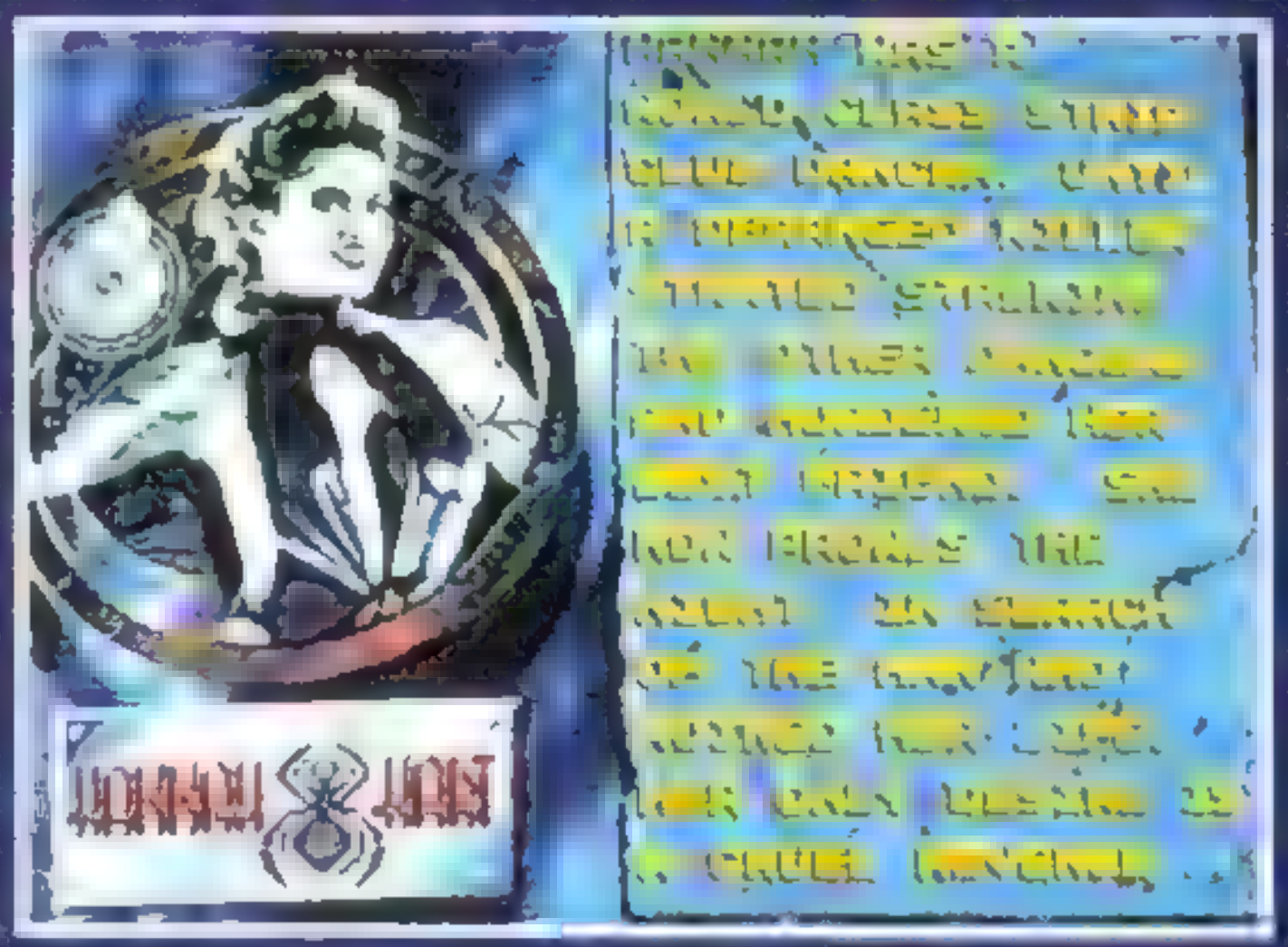
Get A GriP

STD announces Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation controllers

Can't wait to get your hands on a Sega Saturn or Sony PlayStation? Well, STD Entertainment, makers of quality 16-bit and PC controllers and speakers, has got just the thing for those grubby little paws. When the Saturn and PlayStation come to U.S. shores later this year, STD plans to be right there with two controllers for each system. For the PlayStation, STD will bring out one controller with independent auto-fire, slow motion, an LED indicator and an extra long cord, as well as a bare-bones controller with auto-fire and slow motion. As for the Saturn, STD will unveil a control pad (modeled after their SG ProPad 6) with eight fire buttons, independent auto-fire, slow motion, LED indicator, six-button arcade layout, and an extra long cord. The Saturn joystick, modeled after STD's Arcade Pro, will have eight fire buttons, semi and hands-free independent auto-fire, slow motion, a sturdy metal base, 6-button arcade layout and an extra long cord. STD also plans to manufacture controllers for Nintendo's Ultra 64 system, should it ever see the light of day. —JK

lethal weapONS





With Tattoo Assassins poised to become the new king of arcade fighters, FLUX gets up close and personal with one of the beauties behind this beast of a game

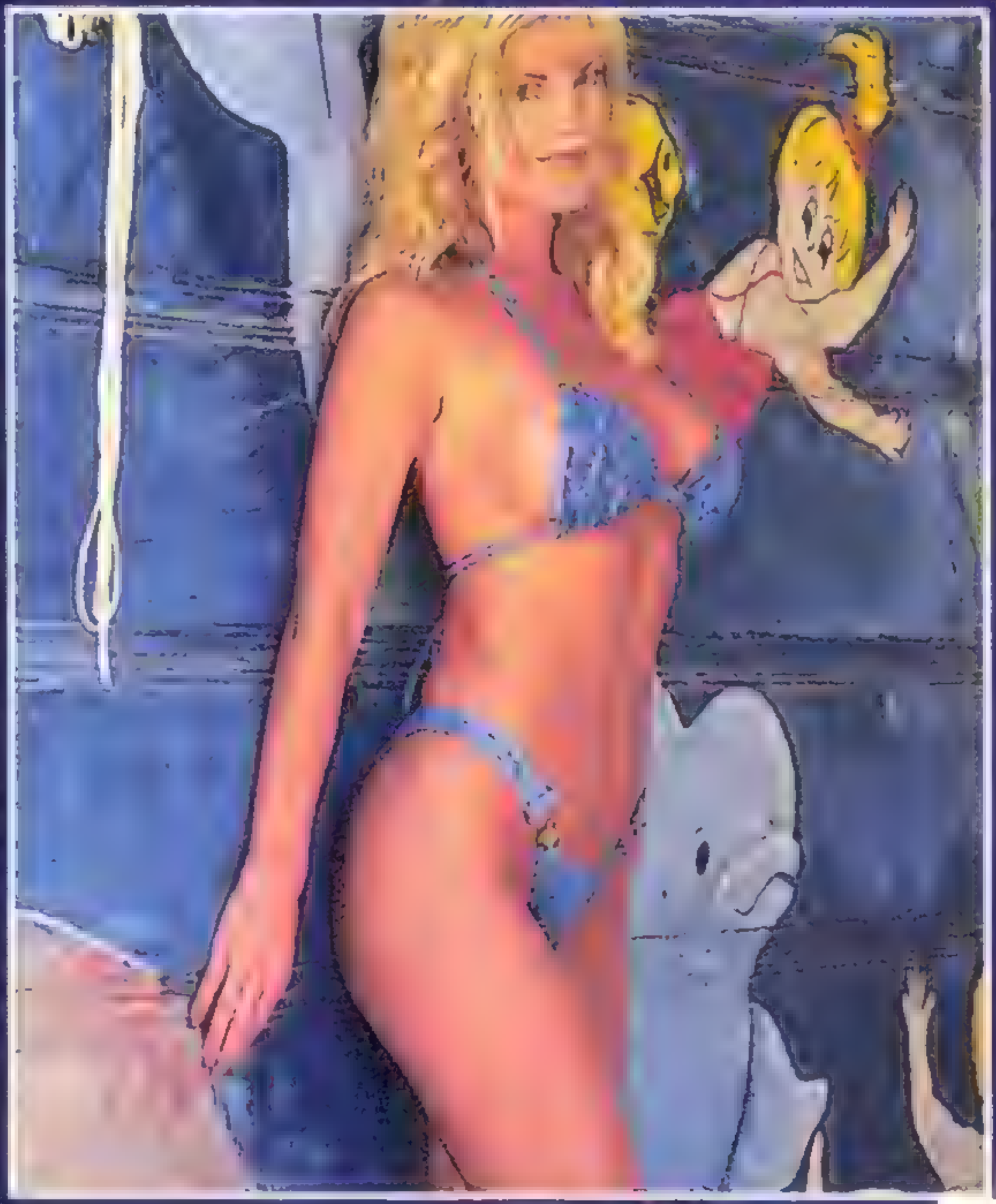
When Gretchen Stockdale packed her bags and moved from her Missouri homeland to Los Angeles with the hopes of breaking into show-biz, little did this simple, midwestern girl know that one day her fine-tuned physique would be used in a video game. Since her relocation, Stockdale has worked as a professional model, appearing in such revealing lingerie catalogs as Frederick's Of Hollywood, an actress (she played an archer gal in last year's *The Dragon Gate*) and even spent six years on the gridiron sidelines as a Raiderette. Stockdale's killer bod has been seen just about everywhere, and soon video gamers will be able to use that bod to do a little killing of their own. In *Tattoo Assassins*, Data East's forthcoming arcade fighter, Stockdale plays Hanna Hart, a tough-as-nails former stripper out to find her best friend's killer.

In the game, which features 14 tattooed fighters all searching for the ancient Ink of Ghize, the lovely Stockdale punches, kicks and uses a whip on her opponents like a master warrior—and yet this buxom blonde hasn't a shred of prior combat experience.

"When [*game producer*] Mike Marvin, who also directed me in *The Dragon Gate*, told me that he was working on a video game, I told him that I wanted to be a part of it," says Stockdale. "And he said to me, 'Gretchen, you do not know how to kick box.' And I said, 'Hey, I didn't know how to shoot a bow-and-arrow either, but I learned how to do that. Let me learn how to kick box.' So he said okay and then I trained for three weeks, learning how to fight. I'm the only character in the game who doesn't have a background in fighting—I was trained as a dancer.

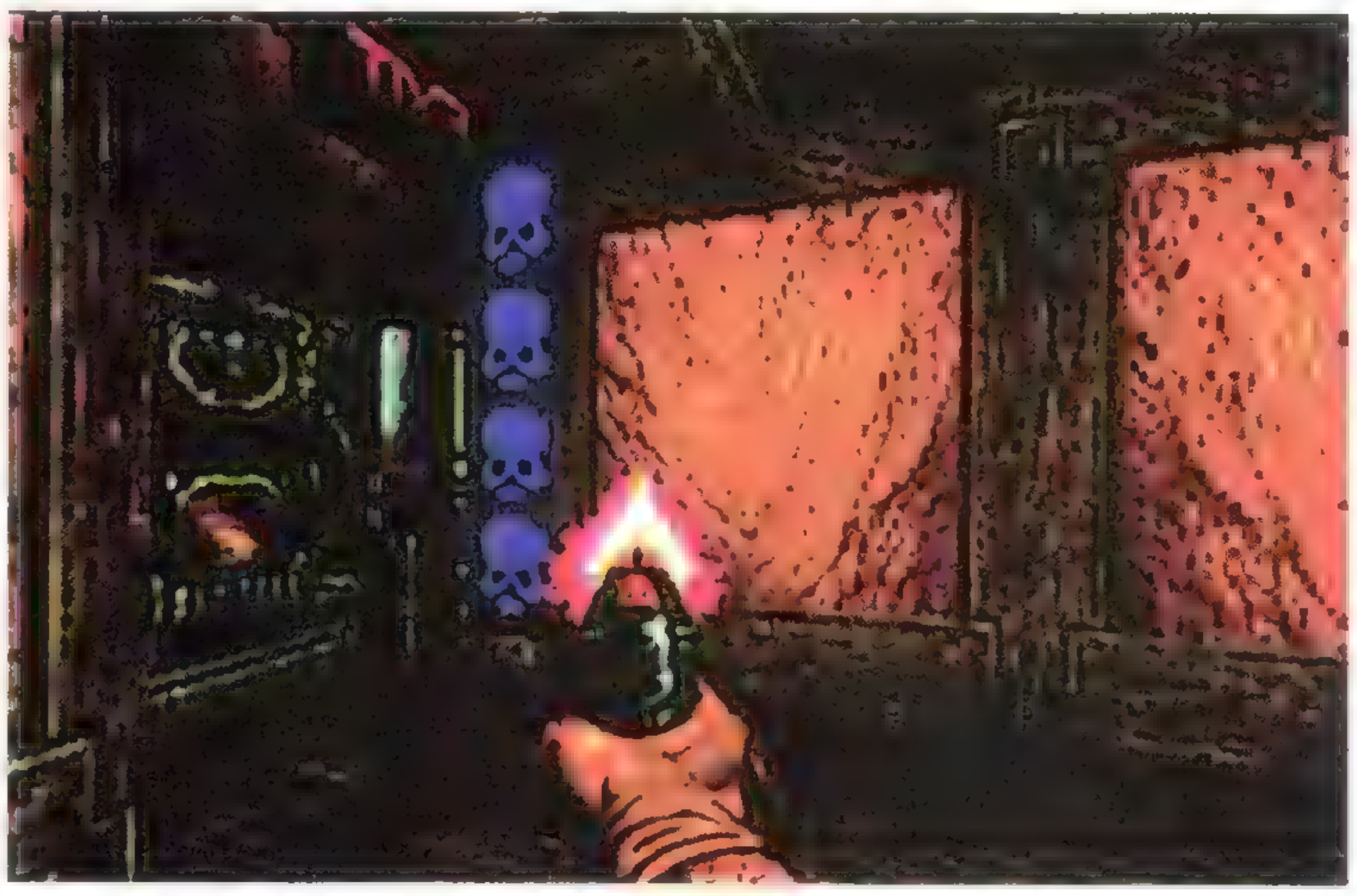
"I'm such a girl, and for me to act brutal was a real stretch. We laughed the whole time I was auditioning.

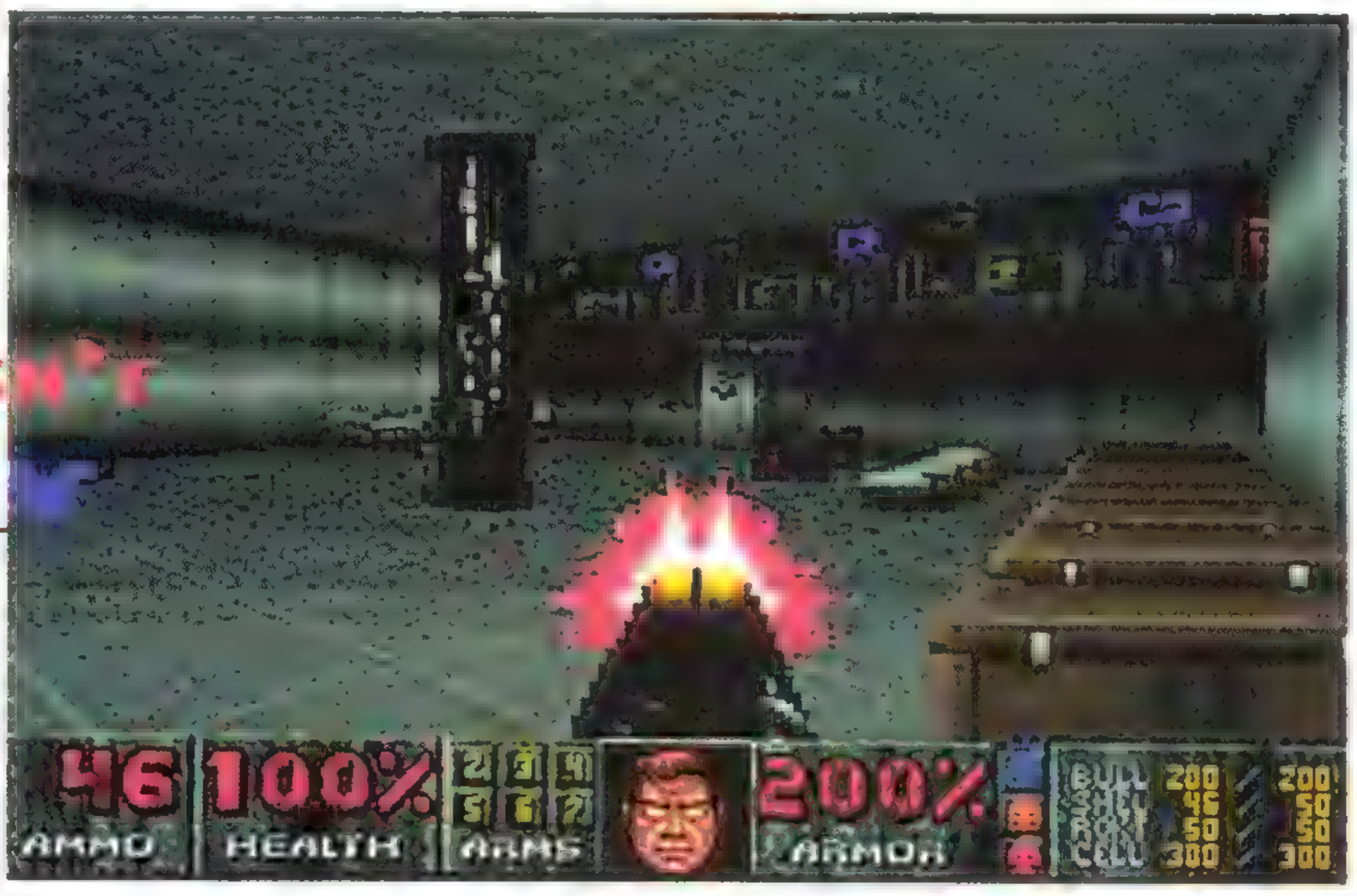
"I'm not where I want to be yet," admits Stockdale. "Maybe I'll get there if they ever make *Tattoo Assassins* into a full-length movie." [*laughs*] —JK



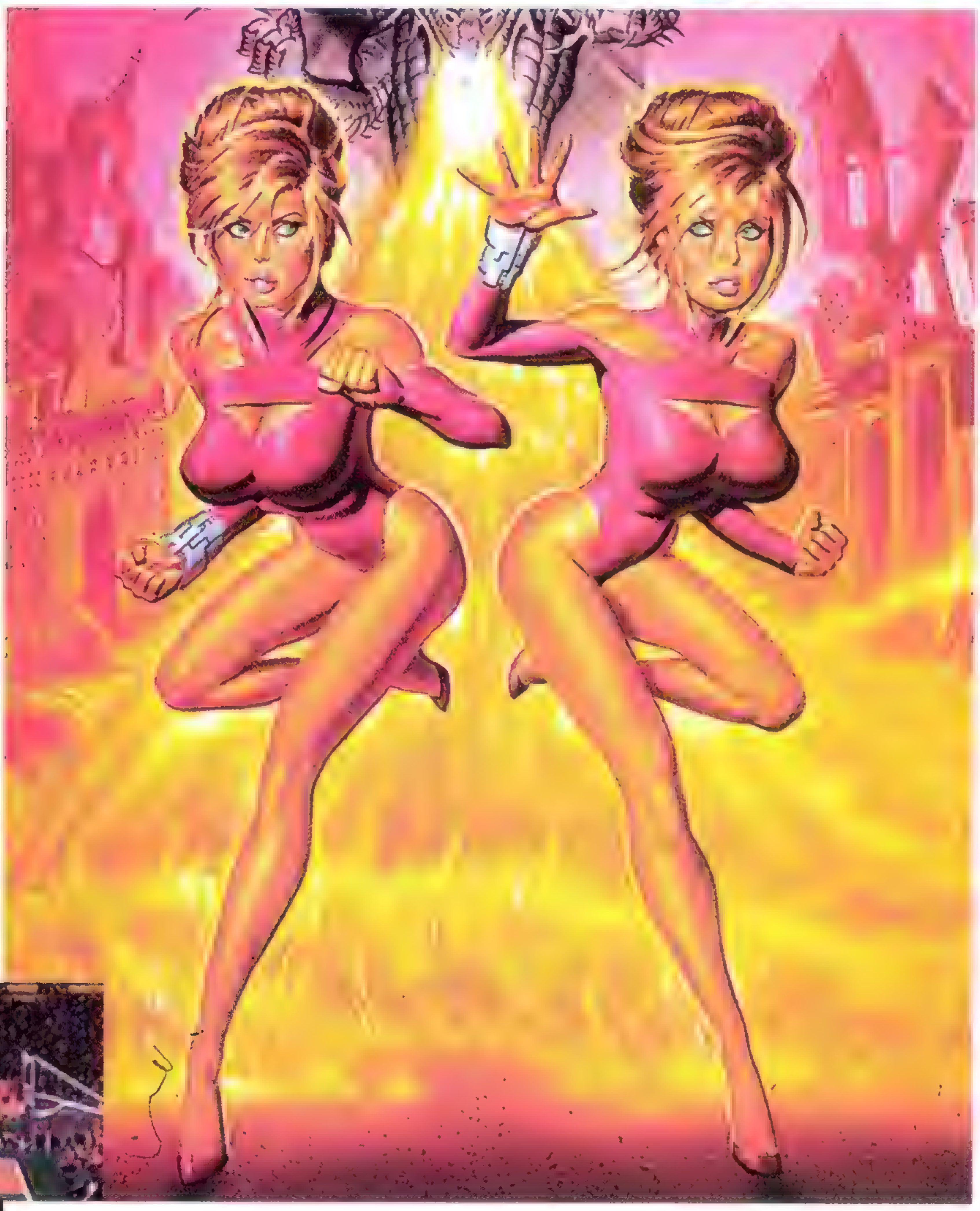
DANGERZONE

You've beaten *DOOM***.** You've conquered *DOOM II*. And now you're looking for something else to fill the emptiness in your *DOOM*-less life. May we suggest more *DOOM*? Not possible, you say? Guess again. The WizardWorks Group's new PC CD-ROM, *D!ZONE*, offers a whopping 900 new levels for both *DOOM* and *DOOM II* and the best *DOOM* shell on the market, *D!*. With *D!*, you can substitute levels, sound effects and customize music with ultimate ease, randomize elements of the game like light levels, object placement, respawning items, enemy speed and buckets more. It'll also keep track of your DeathMatch opponents, and even let you play a standard audio CD on your CD-ROM drive during a game without screwing up *DOOM*'s sound effects. At $40, *D!ZONE* is the perfect way to open up all sorts of new *DOOM* worlds—and keep you scared for months at a time. **—DAN AMRICH**





static STUFF THAT DOESN'T SUCK



double trouble

Since first appearing six years ago on a traffic-stopping billboard high above Hollywood's Sunset Blvd., the Barbi Twins have become two of the most sought-after figures in modeling. Shane and Sia Barbi—both former horse trainers and belly dancers—have since showed their wares in a number of places, including a monster-selling calendar and two issues of Playboy (the second of which went on to sell over seven million copies, the largest in Playboy's history). When it came to the Barbi Twins, you thought you'd seen everything they had to offer—but there's more on the way. Later this month, Topps Comics plans to release *Barbi Twins Adventures #1*, the first ever Barbi Twins comic book.

"The success and fame are great, but it's always been our desire to have a comic book," says Shane. "Ever since we were kids watching *Batman* on TV, we wanted to be superheroines."

"Wonder Woman, James Bond and even Mr. Ed have influenced us," says Sia. "This comic book has been one of our most exciting projects to date. Watch out, dastardly criminals, the Barbi's are here!"

Barbi Twins Adventures #1 is actually two stories in one: In the first, the Twins pose as secret agents who have to save a top spy from a virtual reality master. The second story features the Barbs on a mission to save a local crime boss from being hacked to bits by the infamous female vigilante, Razor.

"This comic will have humor, action and sexiness all at the same time," says Sia.

"But if you're looking for dumb blondes who don't know what they're doing, you're looking in the wrong place," adds Shane. "We're skilled, intelligent and ready to take on the bad guys!"

Sia concludes: "As long as we don't break a fingernail or mess up our hair."

—ROBERT V. CONTE

MTV
MUSIC TELEVISION

CLUB DEAD

WELCOME TO MTV'S 1ST CEREBRAL, CINEMATIC, ADVENTURE CD-ROM

Lana Powers-vixen with a third eye.

Lewis Scudder-Head of Security at the Alexandria-playing with his gun "sparky".

Richie 7-renowned sonic artist- smugly basking in his "Richie 7 Paradox Pod".

In the future, the posh jet set, hell-bent on synthetic experience go to Club Alexandria to get their fix of "V" (virtual reality)... Trouble is people are going belly-up like flies.

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byteme

Reboot, ABC's new animated series, **jump starts** the Saturday morning lineup

Imagine if the inner workings of a computer system were battling each other for control of a futuristic city. Now imagine if the characters involved all looked like they just spilled out of a *Virtua Fighter* coin-op. Got the picture? Good—now you have a general understanding of *Reboot*, the coolest and most revolutionary animated series to hit the Saturday morning airwaves in ages.

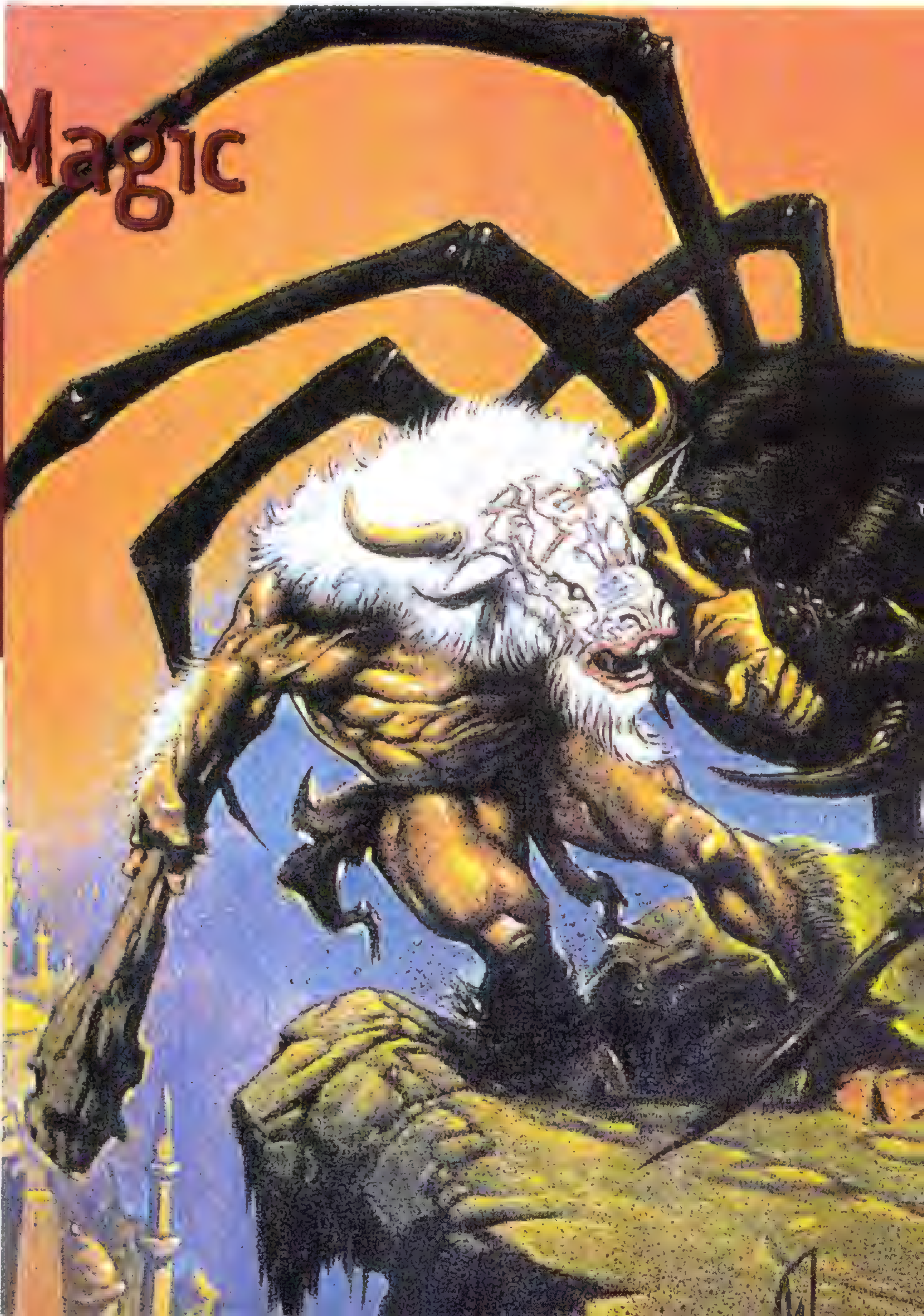
Reboot takes place inside a personal computer and features as its hero Bob, who accidentally finds himself stuck in the high-tech city of Mainframe. Bob's arch enemy is MegaByte, a power-hungry computer virus, and the two battle it out regularly for control of the city. But this is no mere one-on-one fight, as MegaByte frequently enlists the help of his sidekicks Hack and Slash, as well as the villainess Hexadecimal, to try and outwit Bob (through various computer games) and take the city by force. Bob's mission is to not only keep MegaByte's horde from outsmarting him, but also to protect the digital citizens of Mainframe from being deleted.

This ABC-TV series, which airs on Saturday mornings, features incredible computer-rendered characters and fully 3-D worlds, resulting in an eye-popping display of computer animation that's sure to redefine industry standards. **—STEVE FRITZ**

Static STUFF THAT DOESN'T SUCK

The Books of Magic

Tap your mana wallet—here's something else bearing the name *Magic: The Gathering* that you'll want to buy. Acclaim's new Armada Comics imprint is preparing to release two *Magic*-based monthlies this month, *The Shadow Mage* and *Ice Age*, the latter of which is, coincidentally, the name of the next *M:TG* card expansion set, due later this spring. The comics will incorporate specific game elements, such as spells, creatures and enchantments, into each storyline. Hopefully, Tim and the Serra Angel will make cameo appearances somewhere.... **—DAN AMRICH**



JYHAD GETS SHUFFLED

Jyhad, *Magic: The Gathering*'s younger and more complicated brother, has been struggling with something of an identity crisis. "A lot of people see Jyhad in the stores, but they don't know what it is," says Matt Burke, from Wizards of the Coast, the company that created *Magic*. "They don't understand what the name has to do with vampires." So Wizards and White Wolf (upon whose *Vampire: The Masquerade* RPG *Jyhad* is based) have decided to change the name of the game to the more obvious *Vampire: The Eternal Struggle*. The new version, which is slated to arrive in stores this summer, also features some rule revisions in an attempt to make the game shorter and easier to understand. Naturally, all *Jyhad* cards will be completely compatible with the new Vampire rules. And just think—in about a year, even your common *Jyhad* cards will be rare. **—DAN AMRICH**

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Pamela Anderson as C.J. Parker

Lower Right:: Yasmine Bleeth as Caroline Holden, Anderson & Alexandra Paul as Lt. Stephanie Holden

Upper Right: Anderson & Bleeth

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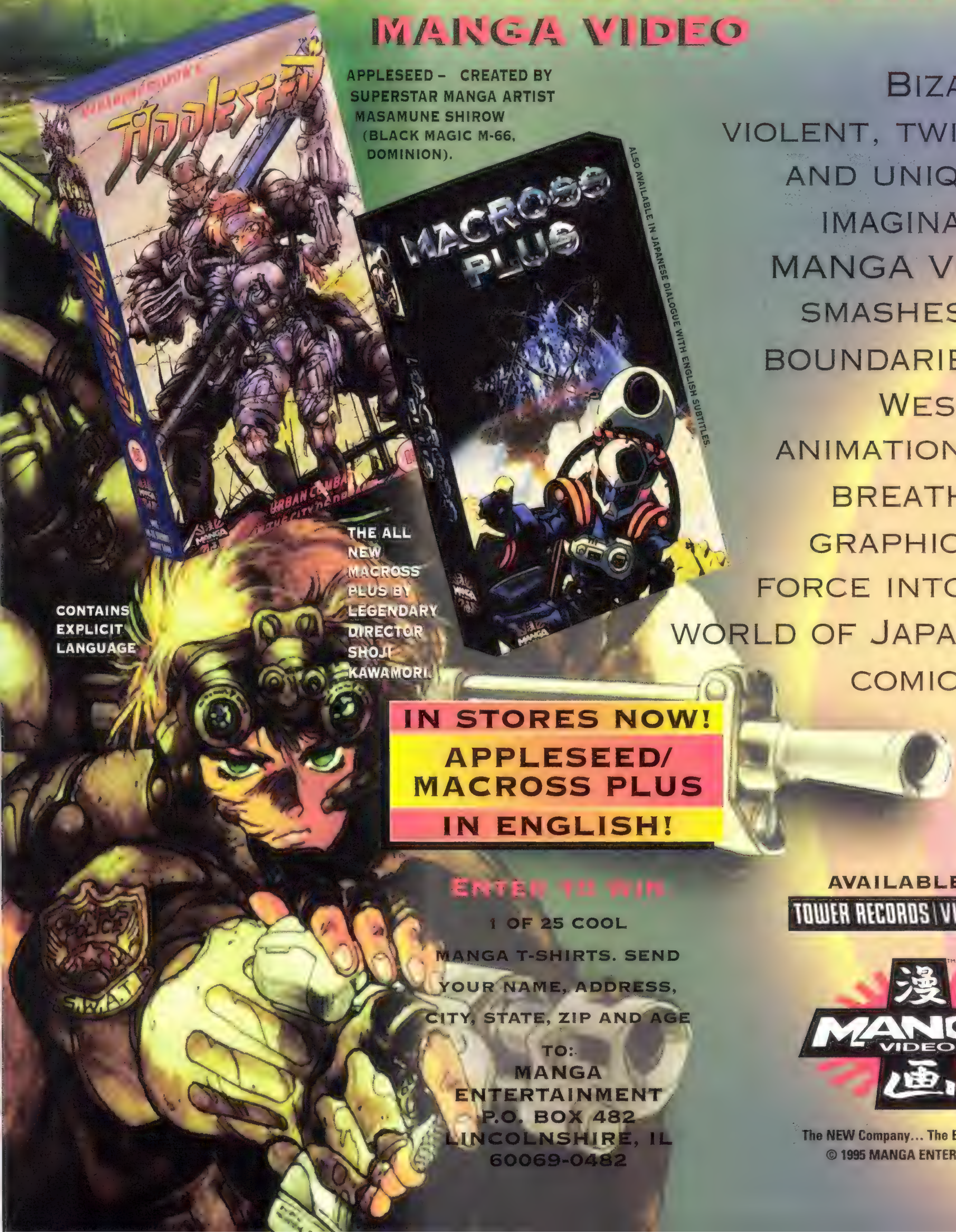
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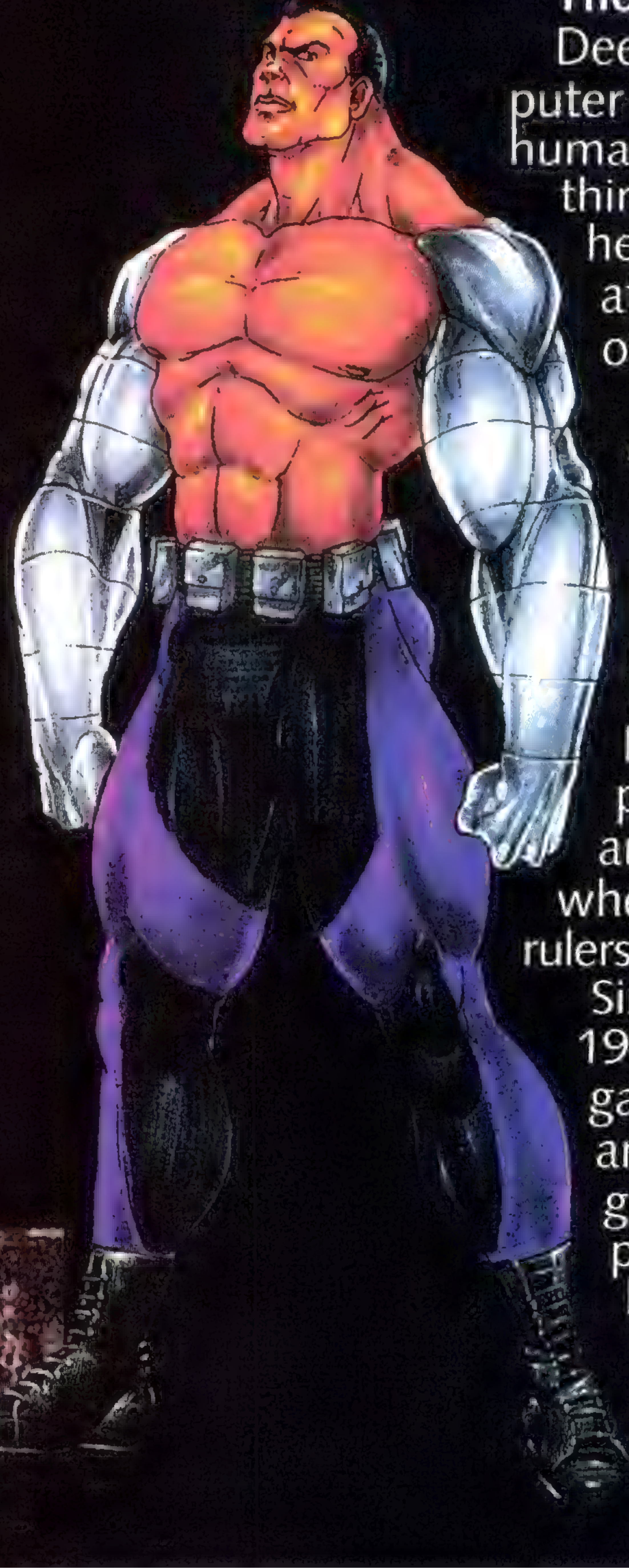
MORTAL MEN

By Dan Amrich
all illustrations by John Tobias

Prepare yourself one more time as head programmers Ed Boon and John Tobias give FLUX the lowdown on *MORTAL KOMBAT III*.



There's something sinister going on in the heart of Chicago. Deep within the bowels of WMS Industries, a team of computer experts is creating a new generation of fighters—superhuman beings with shady pasts, lightning-fast reflexes and a thirst for blood. Busily these designers toil, adding a fireball here or a teleportation move there. Before long, their creations are ready, and are immediately pitted against each other in battle—to the death.

The leaders of these top-secret experiments are Ed Boon and John Tobias, who together have created one of the most successful video game franchises in history—the *Mortal Kombat* series. In the realm of *Mortal Kombat*, *Mortal Kombat II* and the forthcoming *Mortal Kombat III*, they control who lives and dies, and then pass that control on to arcade-goers everywhere. They are the *true* rulers of the Outworld.

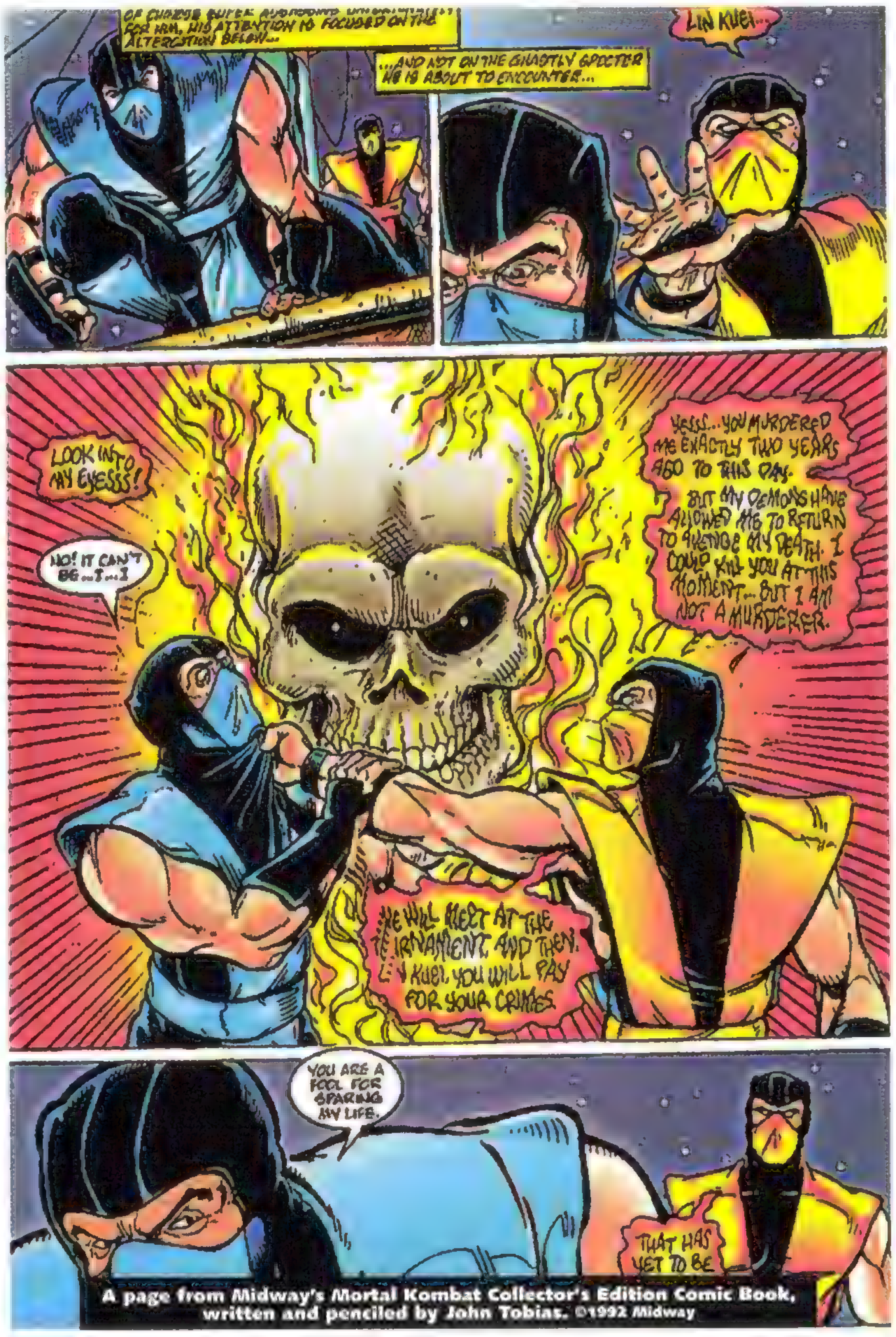
Since its appearance in 1992, *Mortal Kombat* has garnered more attention and caused more controversy than any other video game. In a revolutionary breakthrough, gamers could now control on screen the images of *real* people—digitized videotape of professional martial artists in bloody hand-to-hand combat. Skilled gamers could end matches by performing a number of sick and depraved

"Finishing Moves," most notably ripping off their opponent's head, leaving their spine dangling in the breeze. Parents hated it, the Senate berated it, but the gamers celebrated it. The 1993 sequel, *Mortal Kombat II*, only fanned the fire with better graphics, improved sound, tons of hidden features and of course, more gory finishing moves.

MK and *MKII* still swallow buckets of quarters every day in the 'cades, and Acclaim's home translations have either set or broken all kinds of sales records. But even though Boon and Tobias are revered household names among gamers, both men claim that success hasn't spoiled them yet. "Working here at WMS, we haven't changed," says Tobias. "We're the same people we were before *Mortal Kombat*."

Now, as the world of *MK* expands to include trading cards, a live action movie, action figures, an animated video feature and a much-awaited third arcade game, the only changes seem to be in the improvements department. Midway promises that *Mortal Kombat III* will feature plenty of new aspects, including more fighters, secret characters and nasty new fatalities. Gamers are hungry for fresh blood—and that's exactly what Ed Boon and John Tobias intend to deliver.

"While people may get sick of the huge amount of fighting games that are coming out, I think fighting games themselves will be around forever." —John Tobias


OF CHOSEN SUPER AUDIENCE ... FOR HIM, HIS ATTENTION IS FOCUSED ON THE ALTERCATION BELOW...
...AND NOT ON THE GHASTLY SPECTER HE IS ABOUT TO ENCOUNTER...
LIN KUEI...
LOOK INTO MY EYESSS!
NO! IT CAN'T BE...I...I
YESSS...YOU MURDERED ME EXACTLY TWO YEARS AGO TO THIS DAY. BUT MY DEMONS HAVE ALLOWED ME TO RETURN TO AVENGE MY DEATH. I COULD KILL YOU AT THIS MOMENT...BUT I AM NOT A MURDERER.
WE WILL MEET AT THE TOURNAMENT, AND THEN, LIN KUEI, YOU WILL PAY FOR YOUR CRIMES.
YOU ARE A FOOL FOR SPARING MY LIFE.
THAT HAS YET TO BE

A page from Midway's *Mortal Kombat* Collector's Edition Comic Book, written and penciled by John Tobias. ©1992 Midway

FLUX: Rumor has it that *Mortal Kombat III* is going to be the last of the series. Is this true?

ED BOON: That hasn't been determined. I don't think anybody has said yet that this is definitely the last one; it all depends on how well it does.

FLUX: How many characters will there be?

BOON: We haven't nailed it down exactly, but there will be at least 14. Kano and Sonya are coming back.

FLUX: How many of the fighters are new?

JOHN TOBIAS: Nine or ten will be new.

FLUX: Will we ever see Goro again, or is he really dead?

TOBIAS: Oh, he'll be back in some way. [*laughs*]

BOON: No character has ever been killed off; they might just be missing or something. In the second game we said there was an *apparent* death of Goro, so we kind of left the door open to bring him back if we want.

FLUX: Who will the big boss be in *MKIII*?

TOBIAS: It's Shao Khan again, but we have some new big bad guys, too.

FLUX: Like mid-bosses?

TOBIAS: Yeah. Shao Khan himself is going to change a bit as well.

FLUX: *MKII* was a big leap forward from *MKI*, both in graphics and in gameplay. What kind of innovations can we look forward to with *MKIII*?

BOON: We're adding quite a few new features, major features. *Mortal Kombat* introduced the Fatalities and let you finish the player off, and a lot of people are doing that in their games now. In *MK II*, we really made secret characters a big part of it. In *MK III*, we certainly have a few features which are of that magnitude, things that we believe everybody's going to copy.

FLUX: We've heard rumors of a sixth button being added to the controls—any truth to that?

BOON: When we're developing a game, we always experiment with new ideas. We did mock up a version of the game with an extra button and we haven't decided whether or not this is going to stay in or not. So it is a true rumor in that sense, but it's not necessarily going to be in the final product. It might be; we're still toying with it.

FLUX: There were a lot of rumors regarding things in *MK II* that weren't really there—"Animalities," for instance. Will any of those rumors become fact with *MKIII*?

BOON: We're doing more of the features we had before—fatalities that are related to the background, multiple fatalities for each characters—and we are looking into making some of the more popular rumors a reality. There are so many of them that we don't have time to do them all, but we'd certainly like to do a few of them.

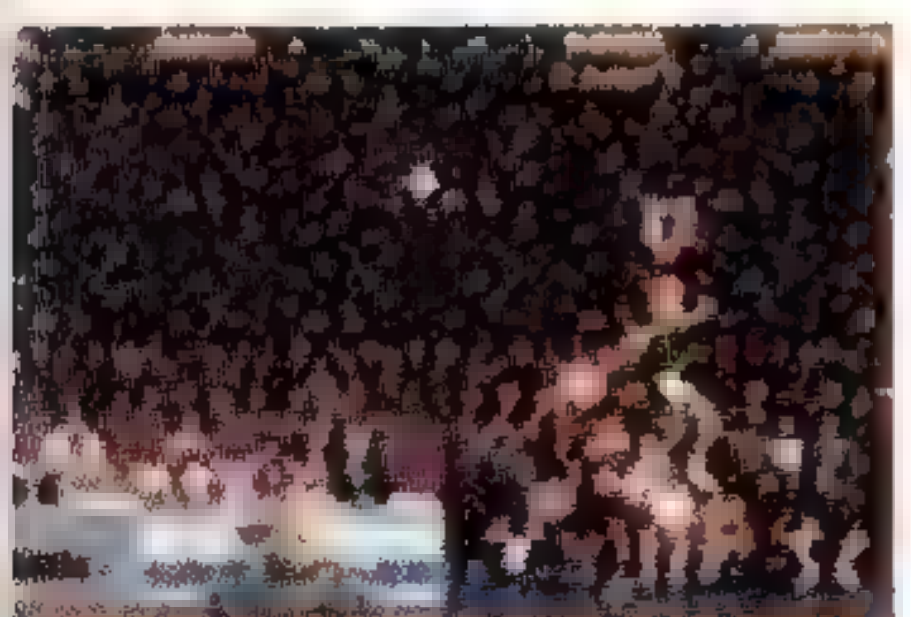
FLUX: Does it upset you when players get hung up on things like "Animalities" and Kano transformations, searching for things that don't exist?

TOBIAS: We've gotten calls from players who've said, for instance, "I saw Sub-Zero turn into a polar bear!" At first we tried to tell them, "No, that's not true." And after a while, you find yourself arguing with these kids who swear on their mother's grave, "No, I did! I saw it!" So now we just kind of let them go; we don't comment one way or the other. And I think that's how a lot of times the rumors just keep coming. People don't really know whether it's there or not. It's nothing that we planned or spread; all the rumors come from the players themselves. And they either believe them or they don't.

FLUX: Have all the secrets in *MK II* been found yet?

BOON: Yeah, pretty much everything has been discovered. I've been asked this question before, so I don't want to say absolutely everything. There was one thing in *MKII* where you could make a skeleton say something when you knock somebody into the Dead Pool. Nobody knew that at the time I was asked by a magazine, so I said, "No, not every *single* thing." The magazine turned around and said, "Williams says that there's tons of stuff left in the game," kind of trying to sensationalize it. Then I would get quoted all over the place, saying there was tons of stuff left. So we really try to take the attitude of not making any comments. Also, if we were to say something and reveal something for *MKII*, then when part three comes out, people would say, "Oh, well, you told *this* person that *last* time...." So we just take the bottom line of not revealing any secrets, period. We say, "Discover them yourselves." The whole thing is about mystery, and that's just one of the facets of the game.

FLUX: What's with the two fighters on the rear bridge of The Pit II stage in *MK II*? One's got a green stripe on his pants and the



other is on fire. Do they have any secret meaning?

BOON: No, it's just a dude on fire. We did put it in and knew that people would read into it. They're actually both Liu Kang shrunk down and we put fire on one of them. There's no guy on fire that you can fight; it was just a thing to add to the element of mystery in the game.

FLUX: Since the introduction of the first *Mortal Kombat*, fighting games have become a saturated genre. Is the genre burning itself out? How much further can fighting games go?

TOBIAS: While people may get sick of the huge amount of fighting games that are coming out, I think fighting games themselves will be around forever. It's just like sports games; nobody's ever going to get sick of a football game or a basketball game, and nobody's going to get sick of a side-scroller. Just when you think that nothing else can be done, a *Donkey Kong Country* comes out, or a *Sonic*. I think there will always be staples of types of games, and then it's just a matter of variations of it, kind of injecting fresh ideas into the staple. Like fighting games—as long as everybody's not just duping what the other guy does, and they're actually extending upon it, adding to it, then the longevity will be there.

BOON: There have really only been three or four fighting games that hit it big and got a sequel. *Samurai Shodown* was really good and got a sequel, *Mortal Kombat*, *Street Fighter*, and probably now *Killer Instinct*. But with all of those, the big four or five, there's so many that come out that never even see the light of day. At every trade show we see a million games by other manufacturers and everyone's doing their me-too type game. I think people see the glut of that and then they see that they're going downhill, but with *Mortal Kombat II*, we sold more than we sold of part one. So we seem to be, at least up to now, on an upswing; when part three is released, we'll see what happens with that.

FLUX: How does the departure of Daniel Pesina, who played Cage, Reptile, Sub-Zero and Scorpion in the first two *MK* games, affect things behind the scenes on *MKIII*? One magazine credited him as the fight choreographer on the first two games.

TOBIAS: It's not going to affect it one bit. I don't know whether someone misquoted him or whether he actually said it, but Danny was never the choreographer on any of the games. I don't know where that really came from. But it's not really going to affect the game at all, other than him not playing one of the characters.

FLUX: Does that mean that Johnny Cage is gone?

TOBIAS: Not really. We've got actors who are leaving, but their characters are still in the game. Sometimes we retire the character and sometimes we recast.

FLUX: Being a game programmer has never really been a high profile job, but you guys have become quite famous in some circles. How are you dealing with your newfound celebrity?

BOON: We're really not that aware of it; people tell us about it more than we experience it. Both of us have been recognized; I've been, a couple of times, at Electronics Boutique or something, and maybe that month there's a picture of us in some magazine. And someone will go, "Oh, aren't you the guy who did *Mortal Kombat*?" I just kind of write it off to being in that month's issue. We're asked about it a lot and kids in arcades recognize us, but it's certainly not to the caliber of seeing Robert DeNiro on the street or something like that. We get phone calls from strangers now, that's about the only difference. People call and will want to get something out of you, codes or secrets. To me, it's not that much of a change of lifestyle or anything like that.

TOBIAS: It's just sort of rolled over us, the whole fame thing. I don't consider myself famous, but as Ed said, you do get recognized on occasion. Some little kid will see you in an arcade and his eyes will pop; he'll run and go find his friends while you try to disappear.

FLUX: How closely are you guys involved with the film? John, since you set up the story behind the games, were you consulted on the script?

TOBIAS: We were consulted a lot more in the beginning. Ed and I met with [T2/True Lies *producer*] Larry Kasanoff from New Line Cinema and he really picked our brains on the whole plotline and what our reasoning was behind a lot of the stuff. We saw the script early on and commented back and forth on the actors who were going to play the characters, the way the story went, the dialogue and things like that. But as the movie went on, Ed and I kind of got busy on *Mortal Kombat III* and so now we're just letting them make the movie. We don't want to get involved too much, and we're so busy working on the next game that we're just kicking back and watching the movie progress.

BOON: During the past two years of this whole *Mortal Kombat* thing, the question we're asked all the time is, "What's it like to do a game and have it be made into a movie?" Things like that. And for the most part, as *Mortal Kombat* was exploding and selling six million cartridges, we were just completely engulfed in doing *Mortal Kombat II*. And as *Mortal Kombat II* came out and was getting all this attention, we just buried ourselves in *Mortal Kombat III*. So I think at some point, maybe it will hit us, after the whole thing is over—of just what it *was*.

TOBIAS: Ed hit it perfectly—we're always so busy, maybe we're just missing it all. [*laughs*] Maybe it's going to be over by the time we realize what's happened. We're just so busy working on the next game and trying to make sure that it's going to be a better product than the one before.

FLUX: How involved were you guys with the ania better product than the one before.

FLUX: How involved were you guys with the animated *MK* movie coming out?

TOBIAS: Pretty much the same as we were with the live action movie. I would send the company working on the cartoon the color sketches that we did for the game, and their story is based really closely on the arcade game, as is the full-length movie. There was a comic book we put out and it was sold directly through the game. It's funny, because when you read that comic book and you see the script for the cartoon or the movie, they're all so close. It's almost like there are scenes taken out of there and out of the game that are put directly in both the movie and the cartoon. There's a lot of new stuff in them, too; the cartoon is sort of a mixture of traditional animation and a lot of 3D imagery.

FLUX: Is this a series or a feature?

TOBIAS: It's going to be a straight-to-video release. I don't know how long it is, an hour or so. They talked at certain times of it being an animated series, but maybe they thought it would be better to make it a higher-quality cartoon, rather than crank out 65 episodes. It's coming out in April, a month or so before the movie. They're both from New Line Cinema.

FLUX: How do you feel about the *MK* ongoing comic series from Malibu Comics?

TOBIAS: I think they're doing a good job. At first, the stories were way off, but we had a couple of conversations with the writer, Charles Marshall, and he sort of got a feel of what we were looking for. I think now they're just rollin'. They kind of know what lines not to cross and the relationships between the characters; things of that nature, they have down real well. I mean, I enjoy reading it.

FLUX: Would you like to be more involved with it?

TOBIAS: No, I'm kind of happy with getting the scripts, approving them and suggesting things here and there. Again, we're so busy working on *MKIII* that I kind of like sitting back. They've got some talented people working there.

FLUX: How long did you work in comics?

TOBIAS: I worked while I was still in school, basically working nights. For a year and a half I penciled *The Real Ghostbusters* for Now Comics. Then I started working here, and while I was here I penciled a few covers for Malibu—*Alien Nation*, *Planet Of The Apes*, *Dracula*.

FLUX: So you've never really lost touch with the comics world.

TOBIAS: Not really. I got way involved here and just didn't have the time to deal with comics as much as I would have liked. I think on *Mortal Kombat*, I saw the opportunity to tell a story through a comic, and that's when Ed and I decided to put out the first game.

FLUX: When *Mortal Kombat* does run it course, what do you guys want to do? Have there been ideas that you've had to sideline?

BOON: There is a downside, if you can believe it or not, to the *Kombat* thing. The other guys around here do one game and it does well, and then they do another one, and you kind of have a whole fresh perspective on how you want to do the games. To some degree, we've become a *Mortal Kombat* factory. We know exactly how to do the backgrounds, we know exactly how to do characters, we know how to do all of the throws, the filming—we're almost in assembly-line mode. The only thing we have to do is come up with cool new looks and moves and stories and stuff like that to keep it moving forward. And in that respect, we're not saying, "Okay, now what angle do we want to go with for the next game?" We always know we're going to be doing a *Mortal Kombat*. You kind of wish you had the chance to do something completely different. But the fact that there are so many people anticipating the next game, that's really fun. So we talk and we've goofed around with doing a license; at one point we talked about doing a *Star Wars* license and then Sega came out with their game. We talked about all types of other games. But until the *Mortal Kombat* thing is over, our time is pretty much booked.

TOBIAS: We're going to just ride this wave until it hits the shore, then catch the next one.

"In *MK III*, we definitely have a few new features which we believe everybody's going to copy."

—Ed Boon

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the top 100 video games

by Dan Amrich, Ralph Barbagallo, Mark East, Chris Hudak, Jeff Kitts, Zach Meston & Jeff Yang

Here they are—the best of the best, every awesome game in between. Presenting...

This is the list. The list. Like it says up there in big, bold type, The Top 100 Video Games Of All Time. **according to us.**

You may agree, you may disagree. We don't care. We've trashed a good percentage of our lives playing the following games—lost respectable jobs, girlfriends, reputations and a helluva lot of cash because of 'em—and while your choice may vary, for us, this list is it.

Every sickeningly addictive game on this list has engraved itself upon our feverish frontal lobes as an unrelenting, unforgettable, un-put-downable classic of its kind: a quarter-crunching, parent-annoying damn near perfect waste of time. Read it, and send in your feeble, whining complaints about why your favorites aren't listed. We promise to look up from our joysticks just long enough to laugh cruelly at your expense, then toss your crappy suggestions into the trash where they belong.

Look, just don't disturb us, man, okay? We've got the pattern. We're in the groove....

From ASTEROIDS to ZAXXON, ALADDIN to VIRTUA FIGHTER and The Top 100 Video Games Of all Time!

SPACE INVADERS

1. SPACE INVADERS

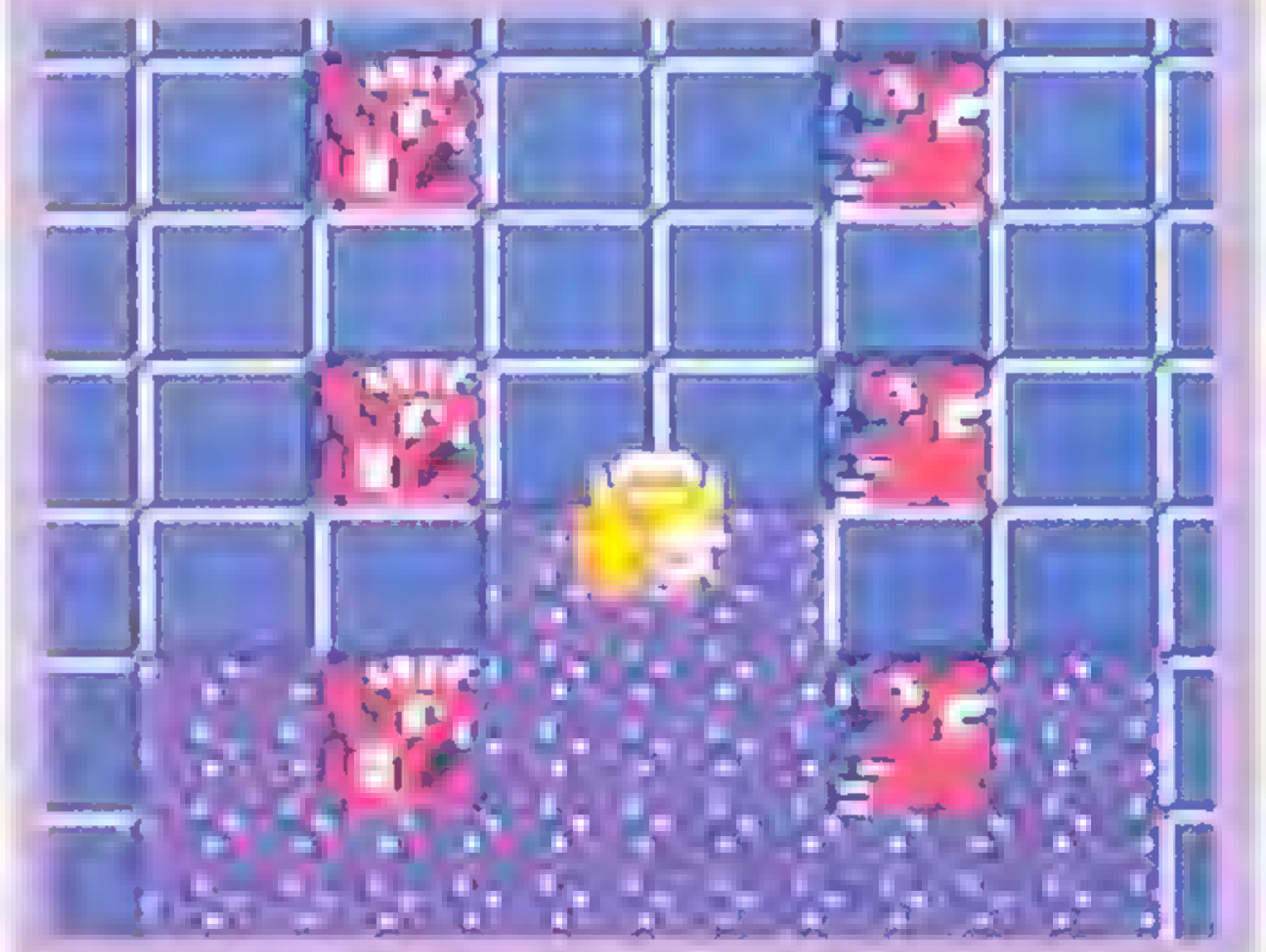
(Taito, arcade)

There are only two ways that games become classics. The first is because they are earth-shaking, revolutionary, mind-blowingly different. Because they kick in the front door of this pathetic thing you call reality, grab you by the neck, and shake you until your brain screams for mercy it will never receive. The second is because they're...pure. Because they're so clean, simple and perfect that they transcend game-ness and become philosophy. These are games you can play for weeks without noticing, games that play you. *Space Invaders*, the Grand Friggin' Poo-bah Quarter Muncher of All Time, is both. Revolutionary: Before *Space Invaders*, video games were tools—*Pong*, *Tank*, *Space Wars* and the like let you play against another user, or possibly against a computer mimicking a human opponent. Video games were electronic simulations of things that might just as well have existed in real life. (C'mon—table tennis is more fun than *Pong* ever was.) And because they were simulations, someone always won and someone always lost. Space Invaders brought a new, revelatory dimension to video gaming: It created a situation that could only exist in videospace. It made it hellishly dangerous. And it put you right smack in the eye of an alien storm. The diabolical conceit, you'll remember, was this: The enemy was a writhing, marching army of intergalactic ghoulies, descending like hail upon you—a tiny, single defender hiding behind swiftly decaying bunkers. And—here's the real innovation—you couldn't win. No matter how long you lasted, no matter how accurately you shot, the stomp-STOMP-stomp-STOMP of the invaders or the sizzle of their crapped-out bombs would eventually get you. But you'd hold out, hold out as long as you could, and take as many of 'em down with you as possible...Is it any wonder it became the biggest grossing game of all time when it arrived in arcades and bars and hotel lobbies around the world? Nope. *Space Invaders* wasn't just a game: it was a way of understanding life itself. Stomp-STOMP-stomp—STOMP....

2. LEGEND OF ZELDA

(Nintendo, SNES)

The king of grog-and-pretzels action/RPG fantasy games. Tight graphics, challenging situations, lots of rewards for the curious, the pleasing sense that everything on the screen has a purpose, and the freedom to explore and fight battles without rails, cheap storyline cop-outs, or any of that "The Spider hits you!" crap.



3. DOOM

(id Software, PC)

The ultra-violent and terribly addicting game responsible for at least thirty copycats and probably the biggest media blitz in video game history. Newer games like *Dark Forces* and *Descent* continue to improve on the first-person "virtual" shoot-'em-up, but for some reason, none come close to capturing the dark and bloody atmosphere of *DOOM*. WARNING: *DOOM*ing for hours on end can result in the severe inability to interact in the real world without slicing a dog in half with a chainsaw.

4. SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

(Sega, Genesis)

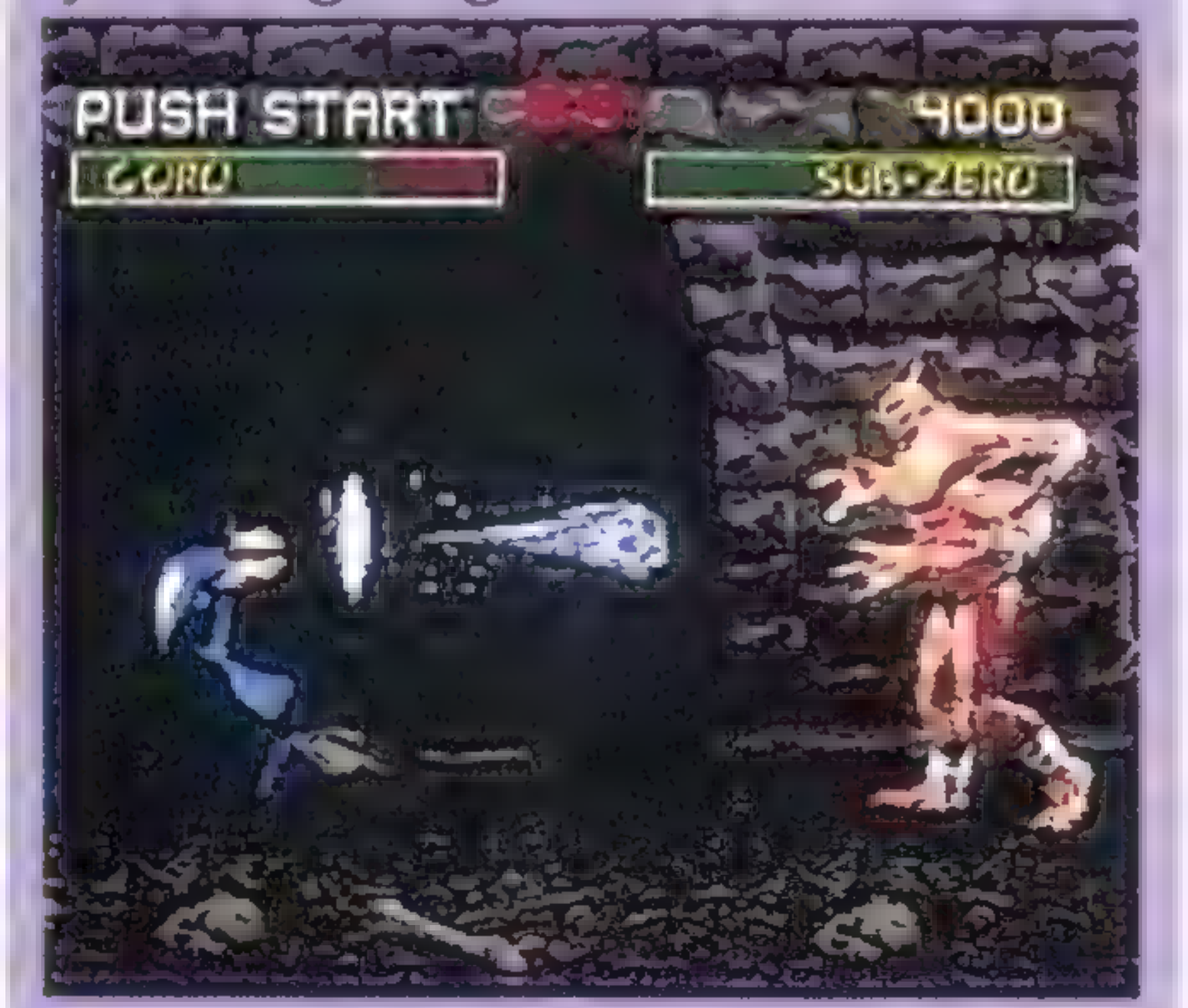
He's blue, he's bad, he's environmentally conscious...he's Sonic The Hedgehog! A classic on the modern cute-hero platform-hopper movement. Sure, *Mario* may be the original, but *Sonic* gave us real music, to "Oh-my-god-what's-happening," wait cycles with personality, and psychedelic, pinball-style bonus stages guaranteed to produce adrenaline, vertigo and/or motion sickness.

SCORE 15100
TIME 1 03
RINGS 20

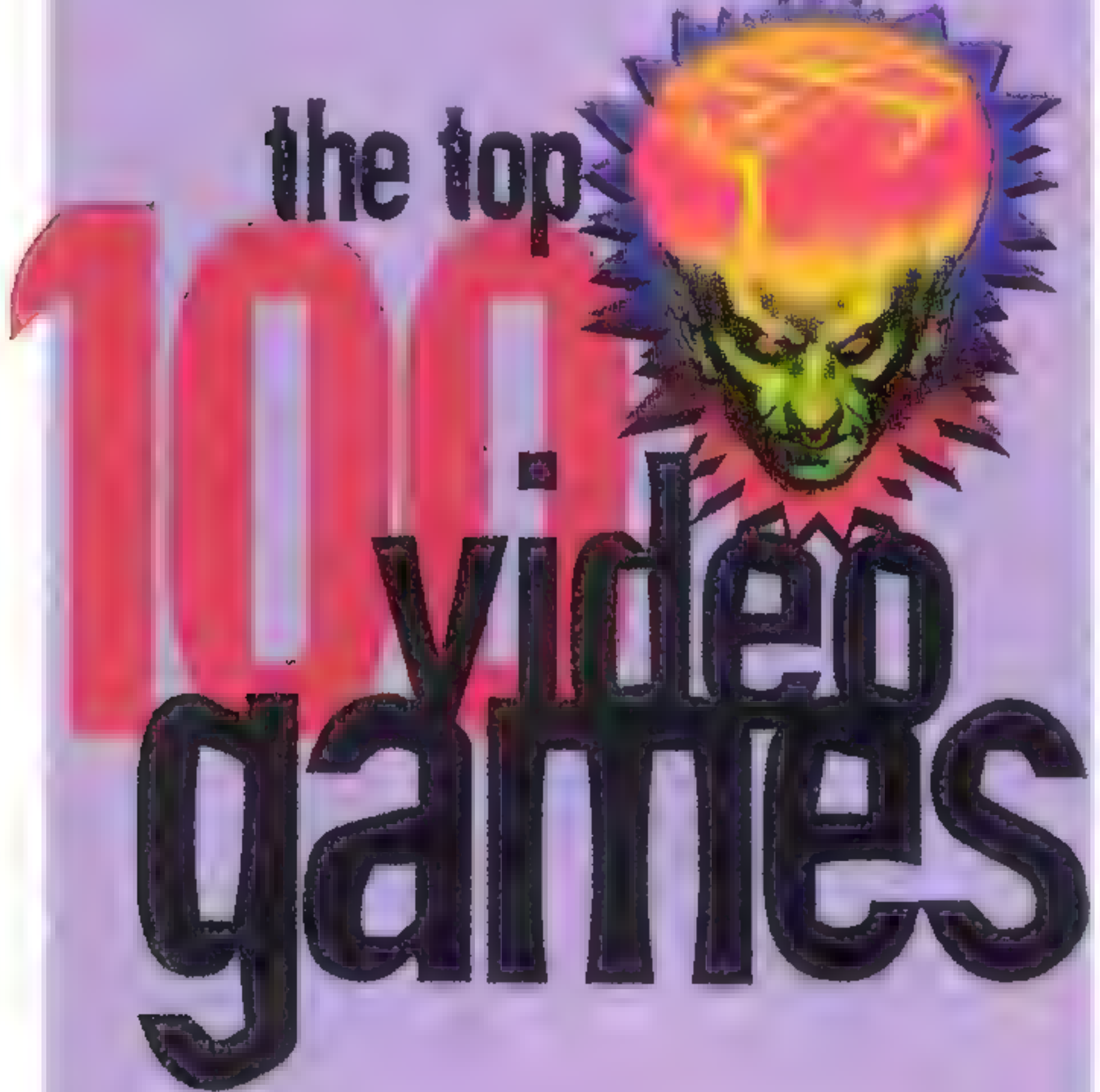
5. MORTAL KOMBAT

(Bally/Midway, arcade)

Your opponent is wobbling, weak, vulnerable as you smirk beneath your mask. You could take him down with a punch—but somehow, that just isn't enough. No: you must do more than just defeat him. You must shame him. Obliterate him. You must...FINISH HIM! With a lunge and a thrust you pull his still-beating heart from his chest and hold it aloft like the trophy of victory that it is.... Let's not beat around the bush, buds. *MK* has nice digitized graphics, decent gameplay and a pretty kewl storyline and characters. But if you're going to call *MK* a clas-



why: the FATALITIES! The *Street Fighter* series brought head-to-head play back into style—made the games that

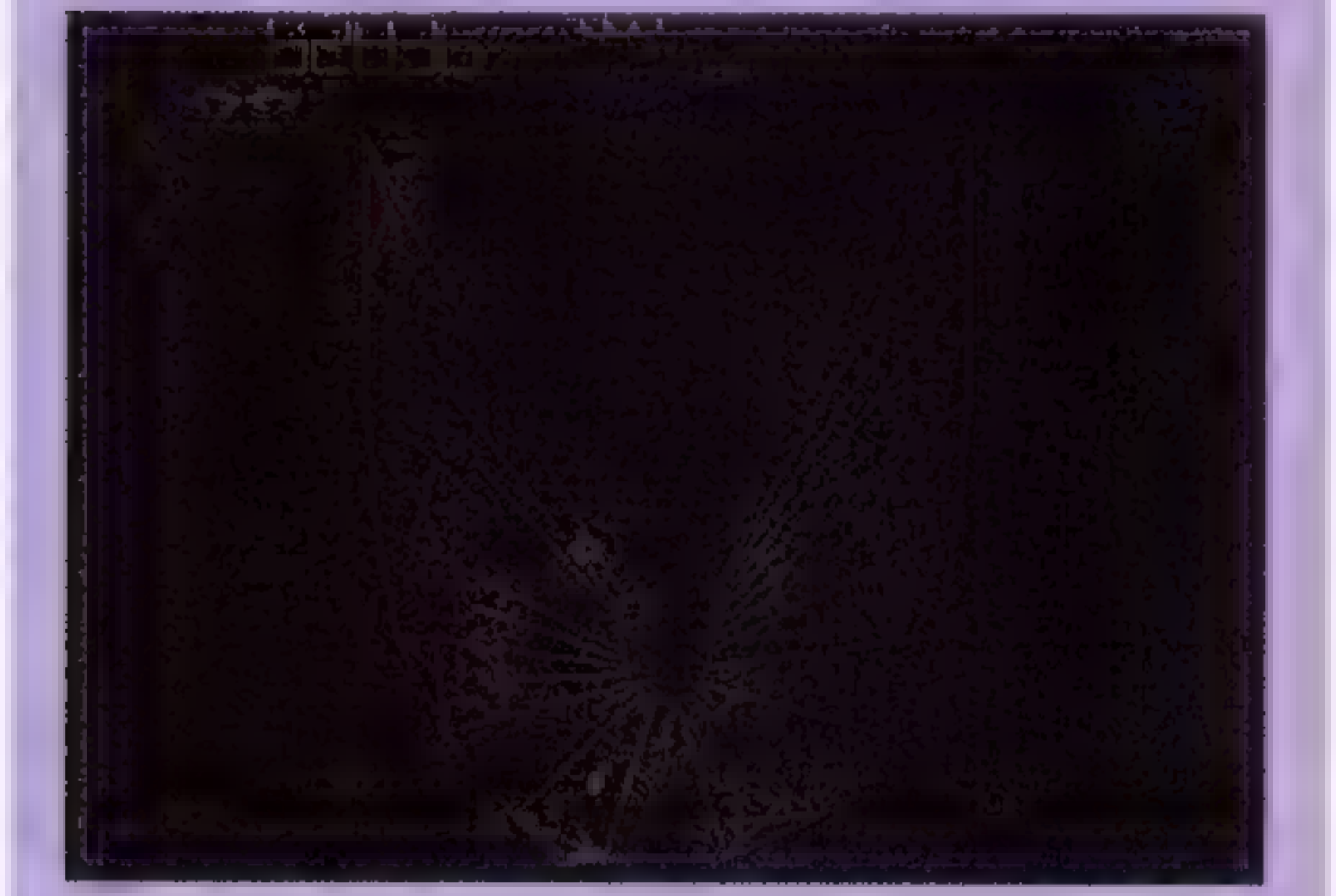


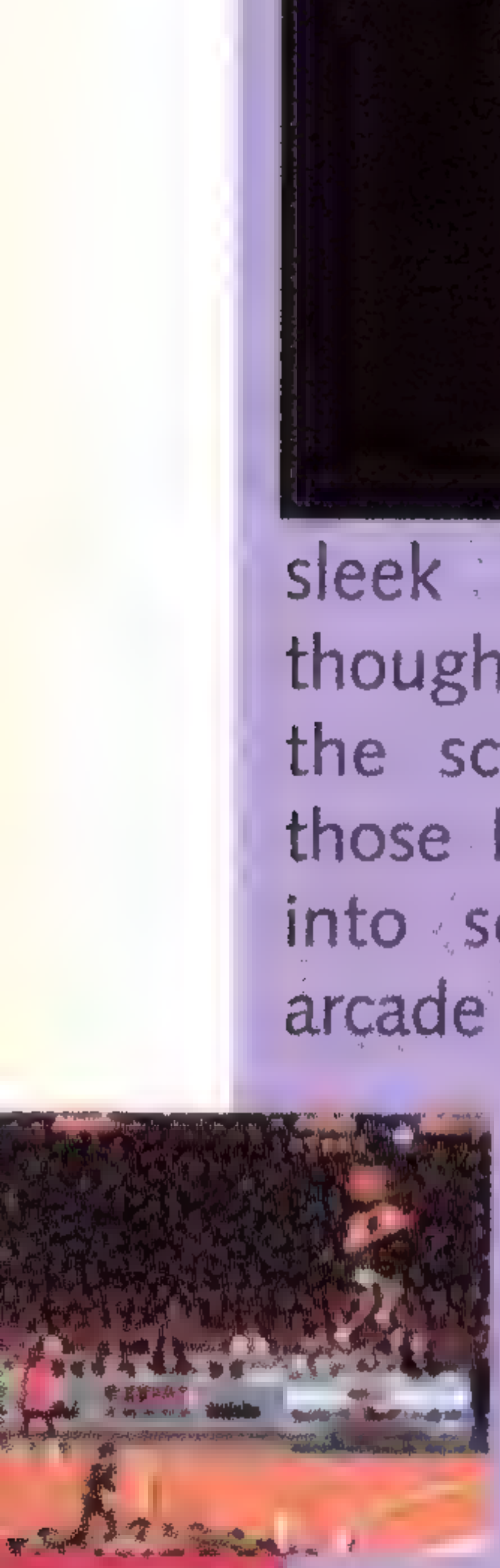
had gone from "opponent vs. opponent" to wussy "you vs. the computer" action back into the woodie-swingin', testosterone-pumpin', mano-a-mano challenge that any fan of street b-ball or drunken bar brawling will recognize and revere. What was always missing in *SF*, however, was that little bit extra. The kick-him-when-he's-down, the salt-in-his-wounds, the insult to injury. Yeah. Well, *MK* has that—in glorious, living color. *MK* was the first game that felt less like an entertainment than a duel to the death, and proved it in big red splashed right up on the screen. And the fact that parents and congressmen and Fundamentalists hate it is just the icing on the cake. Long live *MK*.

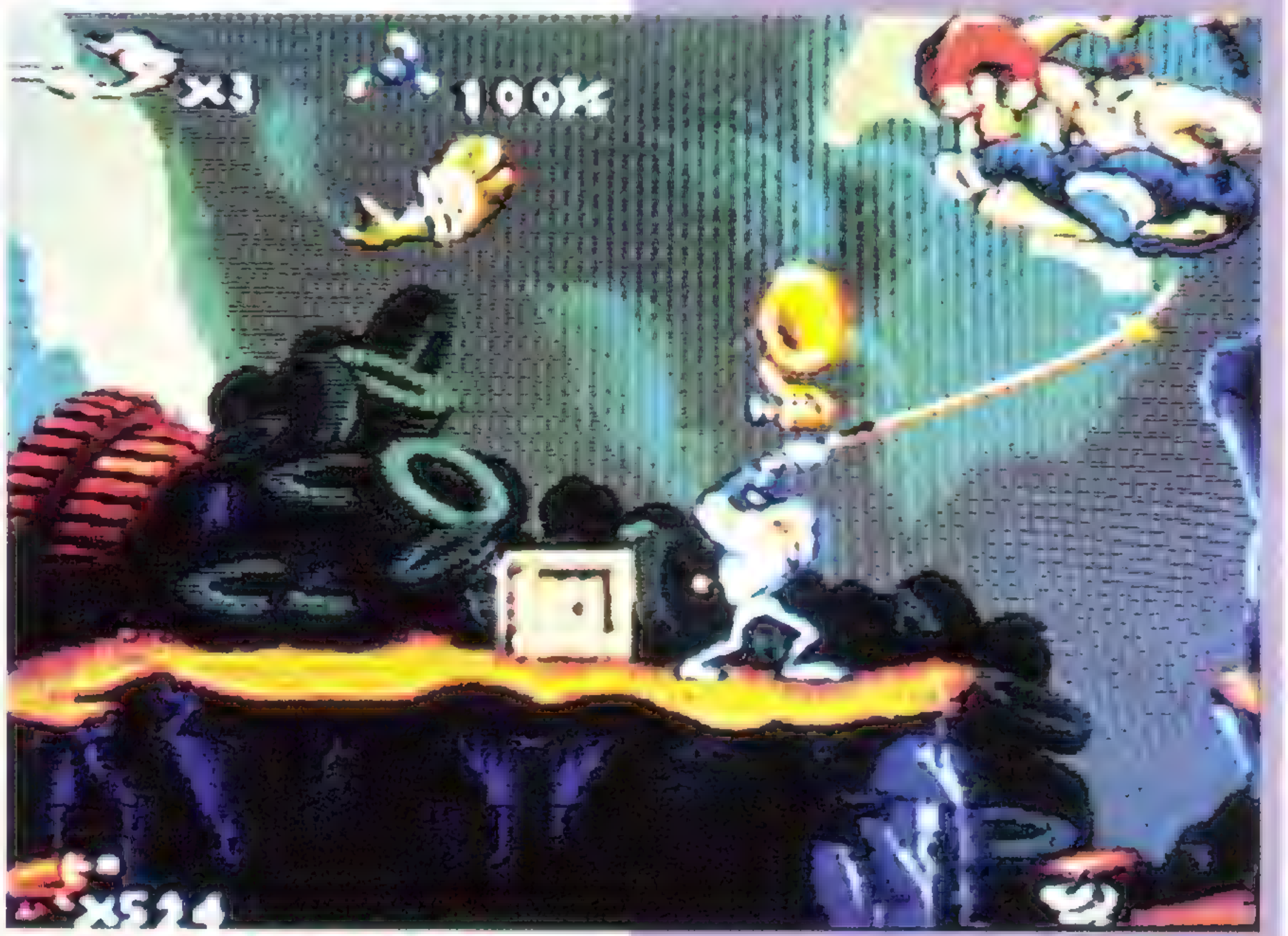
6. TEMPEST

(Atari, arcade)

Once upon a time, vector graphics were king. They were sleek and futuristic, even though they were just lines on the screen. But Atari took those lines and turned them into some of the greatest arcade games ever. And the best vector coin-op machine for white-knuckle intensity, bar none, was *Tempest*. Players controlled a yellow, crab-like Zapper around the edge of a wire-frame pit, shooting at Flippers, Quarks and other nasties out to do you in. Proof positive that intense gameplay need not be accompanied by lush visuals. Minimalist mayhem at its finest.







7. EARTHWORM JIM

(Playmates, SNES/Genesis)

Intensely great gameplay. Wiggy, hilarious animation. Complex, richly rendered backgrounds. Despite sticking you into the dubious boots of a radioactive nightcrawler, *Earthworm Jim* totally kicked ass. Not to mention the fact that, for us here at FLUX, finding a way of playing with worms that was actually more entertaining than cutting them in half or stepping on them was an eye-opening experience.

8. NHL '95

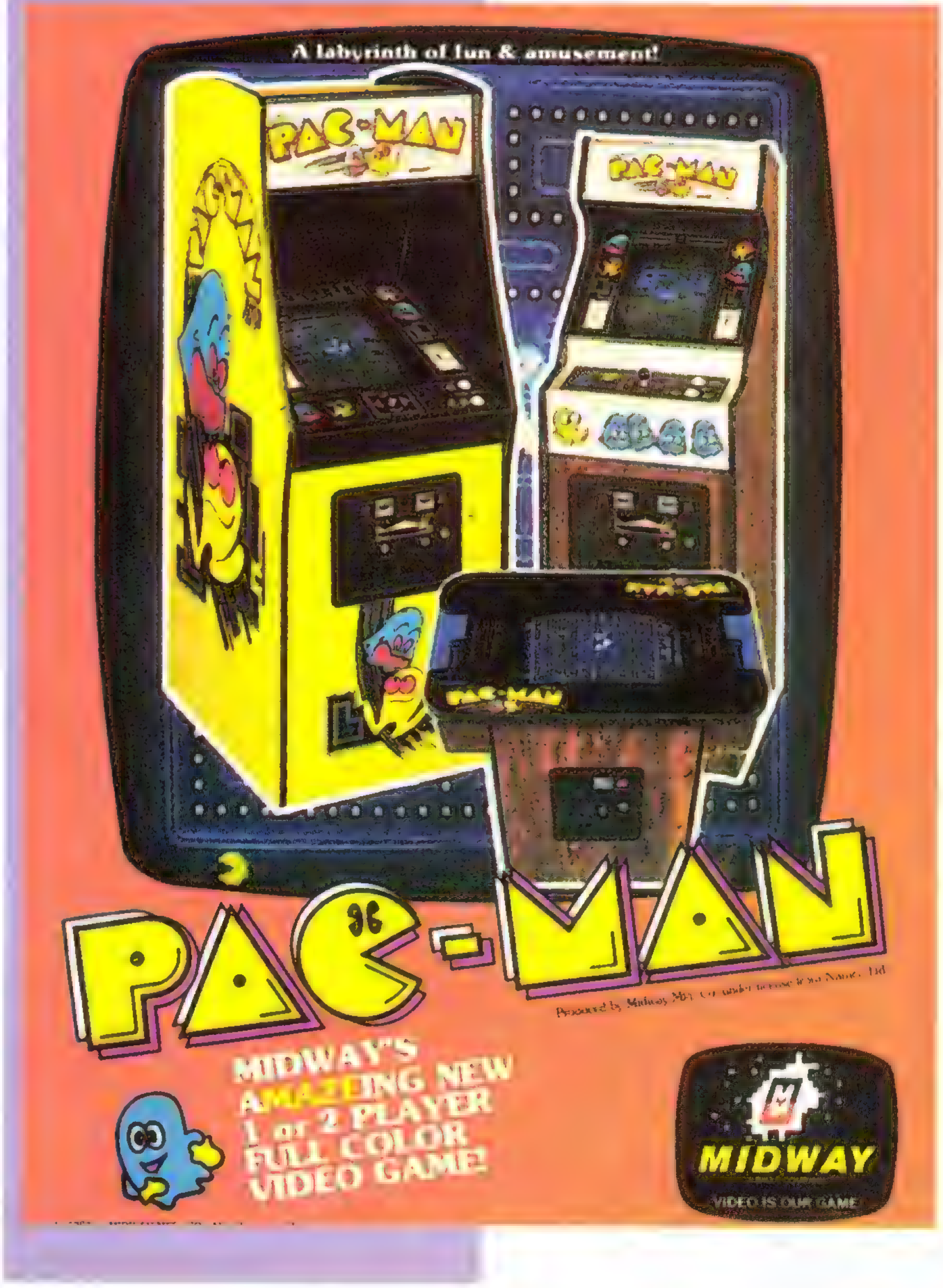
(Electronic Arts, Genesis)

When it comes to sports games, hockey fans have always been the most selective. Hell, they're downright picky. Just look at the facts. With other sports, gamers have always enjoyed a healthy array of choices. *Madden* or *Montana*? *Hardball* or *RBI*? *NBA Live* or *NBA Jam*? For non-hockey sports fans, selecting a quality cart has been a breeze. But not hockey. Oh, no—for the past four years, rink rats across the globe have found solace in only one line of hockey video games: EA's *NHL* series. No other hockey cart in gaming history has been able to challenge *NHL*'s realism and fast action game play. From drop passes, one-timers and penalty shots to shattered glass, game-ending injuries and bone-crunching body checks, *NHL '95* is not only the epitome of hockey carts, but also one of the most brilliantly engaging sports contests in gaming history.

9. PAC-MAN

(Midway, arcade)

You want maze games? Don't look any further than the leader of the Pac—the first, the original. *Pac-Man* was the first 24-hour game, my friends—the one that made your parents get the arcade owners to turn off the machine before you let yourself be pulled away, kicking and screaming. The secret, of course, was the patterns: memorize the Tao of Inky, Blinky, Pinky and Clyde and you'd be five chomps ahead of them, all the time. So love may be temporary, but *Pac-Man* on a pattern was forever. The only thing dragging Mr. Pac down from his rightful place up near the top is the dozens of crappy bastard offspring Namco (the original programmers) have cloned off of the glorious original. Besides *Ms. Pac*, there was *Super Pac-Man*, *Baby Pac*, *Pac-Dog*, *A-Pac-A-Lips Now*, and our favorite, *Six-Pac*. *Pac*

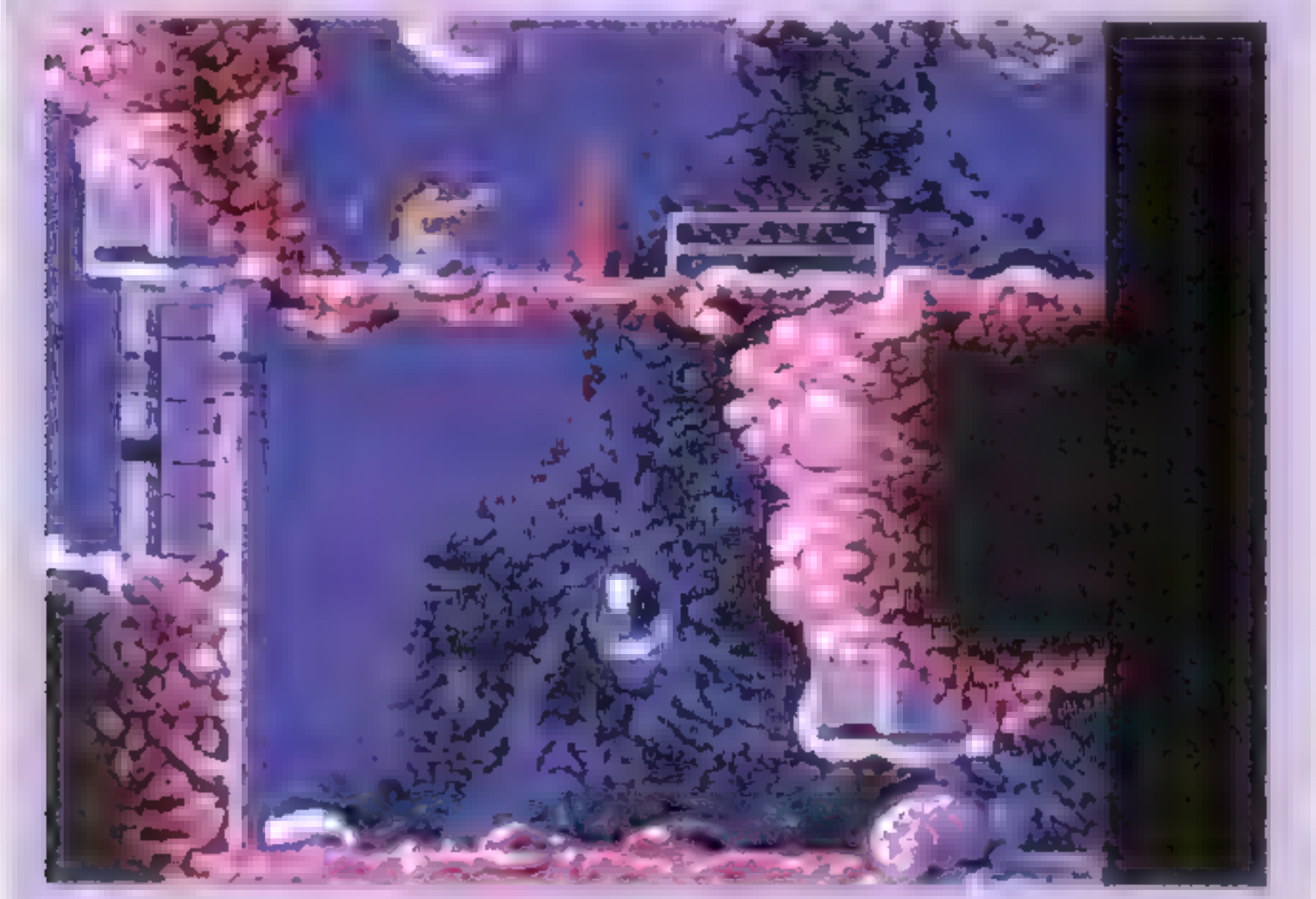

A labyrinth of fun & amusement!
PAC-MAN
PAC-MAN
MIDWAY'S AMAZEING NEW 1 or 2 PLAYER FULL COLOR VIDEO GAME!
MIDWAY
VIDEO IS OUR GAME

also got negative points for spawning a scary-ass bubblegum pop song called "Pac-Man Fever" back in 1981. But we forgive him anyway. Just barely.

10. FLASHBACK

(U.S. Gold, Genesis/SNES)

An *Out Of This World* meets *Total Recall* science-fiction adventure. Smooth rotoscoped animation, cool character moves (including the immensely satisfying "pistol-whip"—thwack!), and enough story motivation to keep you going for weeks.



11. ASTEROIDS

(Atari, arcade)

One of the vector graphics Great Old Ones. Kill rocks, hunt saucers, kill rocks, hunt saucers, all to a *Jaws*-like electronic beat. Controls are nice, spare. Good game to sort your life out to.

12. STREET FIGHTER II

(Capcom, arcade)

Before it was a major motion picture featuring Jean-Claude Van Damme and his buns of steel, it was the most popular arcade game since That Round Yellow Dot-Eating Freak. Often imitated, never duplicated, *SF II* was the first beat-'em-up that truly gave the player the joyous sensation of kicking someone's ass. No excessive bloodletting, no Congress-enraging fatalities, just great game play.

13. DISNEY'S ALADDIN

(Sega/Virgin, Genesis)

Smooth character animation and a careful attention to detail, plus some of the best jump n' grab gameplay around, made *Disney's Aladdin* for the Genesis one of the best action/platform games in history.

14. MYST

(Broderbund, PC CD-ROM)

You can lose yourself for many moons in this surreal, high-res, absolutely gorgeous fantasy/mystery PC CD-ROM. It even includes a sort of Dream Journal to jot important clues, notes and related facts in. Not much in the action department, but it's not supposed to be. Finishing this game is a little like waking from a long, strange and beautiful dream.

15. CENTIPEDE

(Atari, arcade)—Okay, so it's a chick game. I mean, pastels.... Damn! Still, *Centipede* was the first real innovation on *Space Invaders* to some down the pike in a while, and it got your girlfriend off your back while you paid attention to important things, like *Defender*.

16. VIRTUA FIGHTER

(Sega, arcade)

The most satisfying fighter in existence. No fireballs or force fields—just fluid kinetic (and sometimes brutal) polygonal movement, variable-distance views, cinematic instant-replays, and wicked special attacks that are painful to watch without being Mostly Korny, if you follow me.

17. DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

(Nintendo, SNES)

SNES owners had no idea their little gray boxes could pump out fully rendered, lightning-fast graphics like those in *DK Country*—and for 100 levels, no less! Grab an IV and pop it in your arm: you won't be getting up from in front of the tube for quite a while!

18. COMANCHE

(NovaLogic, PC)

A small software company called NovaLogic scored big a few years back with this jaw-dropping helicopter shooter/sim. This award-winning game features some truly incredible terrain rendering, and is one of the most graphically pleasing flight sims around. It'll even run fast on a 386!

19. NBA JAM

(Midway, arcade)

One billion dollars in quarters later, only word does the record-breaking, backboard-shattering king of all b-ball games justice: Boomshakalaka!

20. WING COMMANDER

(Origin, PC)

Hate cats? In this ground-breaking, immersive, cinematic first-person shooter for the PC, the alien race you're battling is feline. Here, kitty, kitty...eat hot death.

21. PUNCH-OUT!!

(Nintendo, arcade)

This ancient Nintendo coin-op was a boxing game that showed all the action from directly behind the player-controlled fighter (rendered as a green outline so you could see the punches being hurled in your direction). With its repertoire of vocal taunts ("Left! Right! Body blow!") and its personable opponents, *Punch-Out!!* was mighty popular with the violence-craving youth of the early Eighties.

22. ROAD RASH

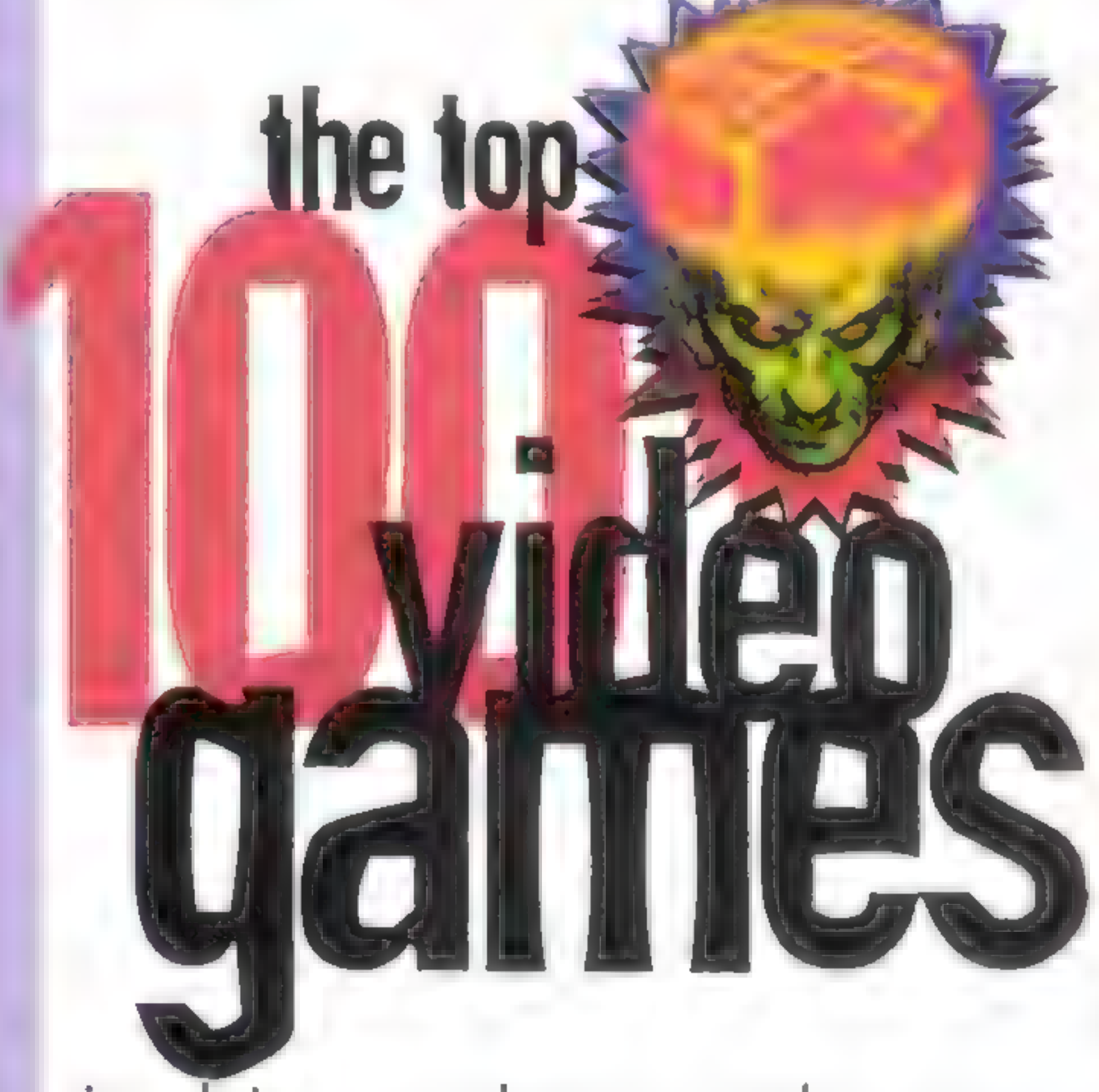
(Electronic Arts, 3DO)

There may not be many 3DO owners out there yet, but is there one that isn't completely addicted to this riveting racing game? Just be careful: clobbering someone riding a crotch rocket on the freeway at 110 mph will get you more than a speeding ticket!

23. THE 7TH GUEST

(Virgin, PC CD-ROM)

A grouchy minority of computer geeks whined that this was just a bunch of puzzle games dressed up in Super VGA graphics. Nuh-uh. *The 7th Guest* is more than that; it's got atmosphere thick enough to insulate your house and a professionally written story that's neither stupid nor cliched. Before there was *Myst*, there was this.

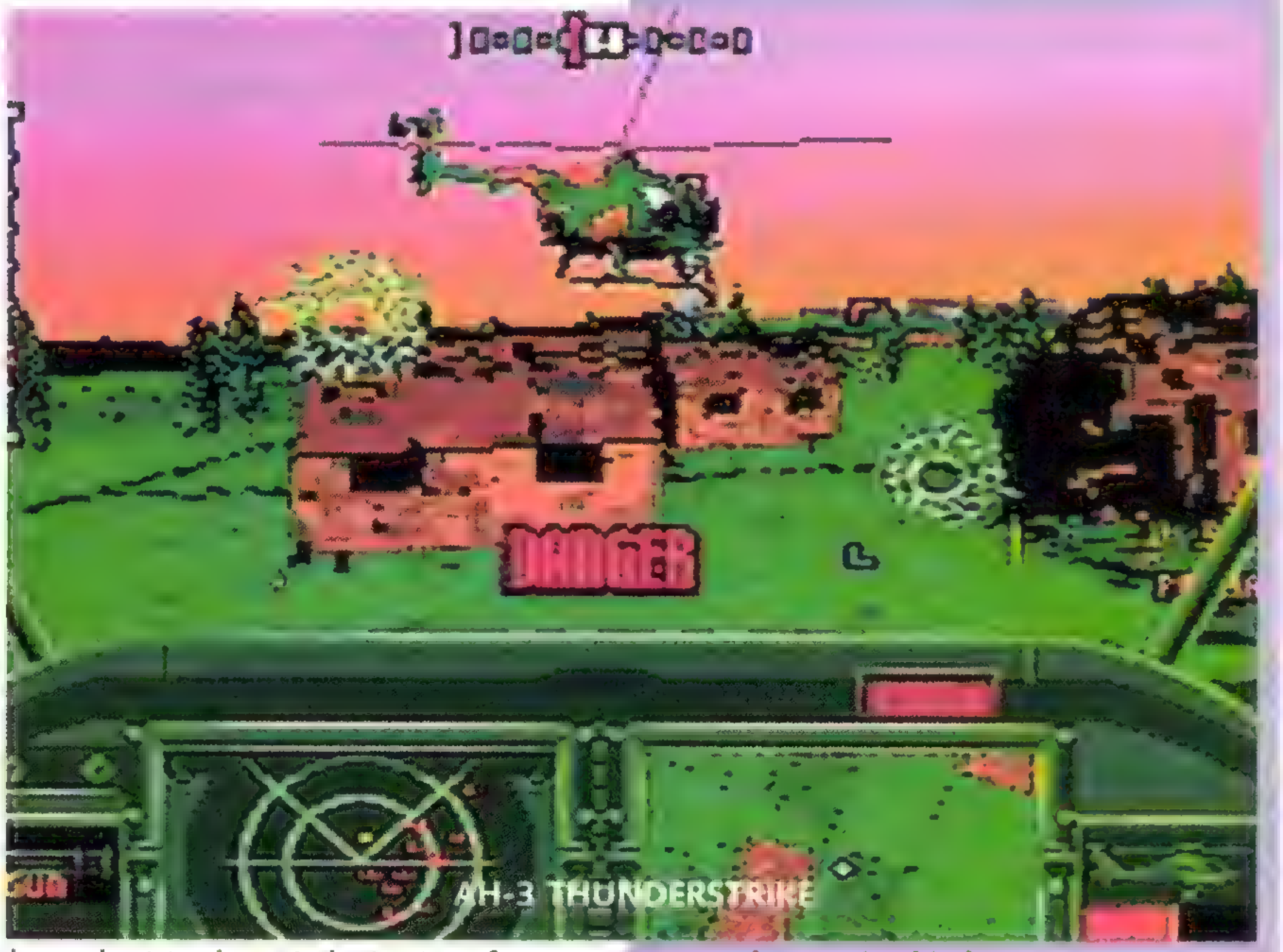


24. MISSILE COMMAND

(Atari, arcade)

The true importance of this

game lies in its subliminal anti-nuclear message, its invitation for all mankind to join in an embrace of peace and brotherhood. Yeah, right! As far as we're concerned, it was the only game which was just as cool when you lost as when you won. New York. Washington, D.C. Los Angeles. Boom. Boom. Boom. THE END.



25. SUPER STAR WARS

(JVC, SNES)

The second great SNES platform game after *Super Mario World*. Game play was on the easy side, but the graphics were so good that they left you stuttering "Homina homina homina..." while losing control of your bodily functions.

26. JOUST

(Atari, arcade)

You're a giant ostrich with a knight on your back, flapping through the skies and jousting in mid-air with other lance-wielding, ostrich-mounted knights. Hit your enemies when your lance is higher than theirs and you turn them into eggs; pick up all the eggs before they hatch and you're off to the next level. Yeah, it's bizarre as hell, but it's as much fun to play now as it was back in 1983.

27. AH-3 THUNDERSTRIKE

(JVC, Sega CD)

The first wave of Sega CD software truly sucked, being either cheeseball full-motion video games or minimally enhanced versions of Genesis carts. Then along came *AH-3 Thunderstrike*, which combined mindless shooting and speaker-imploding guitar rock in a game so good that you wanted to buy a Sega CD just to play it.

28. FINAL FANTASY III

(SquareSoft, SNES)

Imagine an RPG with sixteen different characters, a heart-tugging storyline (with lots of dramatic death scenes), a huge number of varied locations (an opera house, a haunted train and the belly of a sandworm, to name three) and so many hours of game play it'll surely cripple your social life for weeks.

29. SPY HUNTER

(Bally/Midway, arcade)

Try THIS game, Mr. Bond. With zoned-in music from *Peter Gunn*, smooth controls and awesome drive, shoot and crash play action, this game made you feel like you should be wearing a black turtleneck and a silk double-breasted suit. Plus a Ruger semi-auto in a hideout holster. Of course, the sit-down, stereo-sound version was the only way to go.

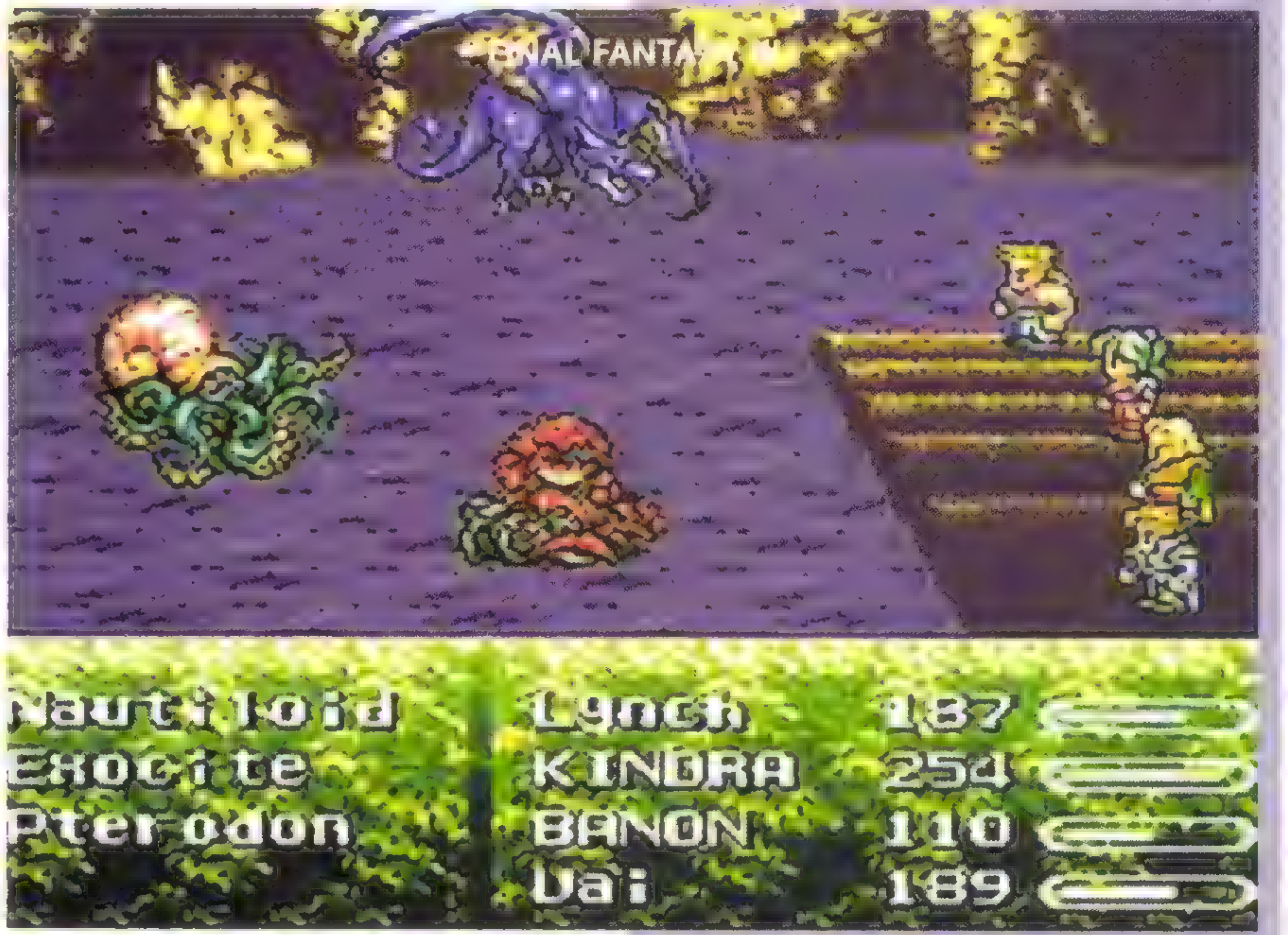
30. TETRIS

(Atari, arcade)

The first game to appeal equally to both chicks and dudes, it was a little too educational feeling (like geometry or something) to make it in the top ten. But was any game any more addictive? And what hypnotic effect did all those spinning shapes have on you, anyway? *Tetris* is better than *Cats*. I will play it again and again.

31. ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

(Mattel, Intellivision)—Even though the caves and dungeons were really just yellow lines, and the single color monsters didn't look too threatening, *AD&D* was still a complex and intriguing challenge for old Intellivisioners. Remember the thrill of racing through the twisted passageways looking for the exit with a dragon on your heels the whole way. If only the Intellivision didn't have the worst controllers ever created.



32. POLE POSITION

(Atari, arcade)

Night Driver with class. Killer colorful graphics, a good illusion of speed, and hey, if you're going to crash into a billboard, why not make it one advertising Atari's other arcade games?

33. PITFALL!

(Activision, Atari 2600)

Yo, jungle brothers, *Pitfall!* was the game that made Activision famous, and for good reason. Despite the fact that you were stuck playing a Great White Hunter type loser named—heh—Pitfall Harry, it took the 'ol Atari 2600 and made it a great game machine again. Jump and swing, jump and swing—nothing more, nothing less. But timing was everything....

34. DEFENDER

(Williams, arcade)

The first—and still the ultimate—side scrolling arcade shooter. Not only were there plenty of aliens to waste, but you also had to rescue civilians captured by enemy ships. Your primary mission was to save them, but it was way more satisfying just to watch them plummet to their death in a sickening, sadistic sort of way. Heh-heh.

35. ADVENTURE

(Atari, Atari 2600)

The red key. The black dragon. Quite an involved little game for its day. Who cares if the pixels were as big as dimes? It was challenging and incredibly fun.

36. VIRTUA RACING

(Sega, arcade)

Polygons, schmolygons—nothing drove as realistically as *Virtua Racing* when it debuted, even if the geometric tires look like they were made of stone. And the versions with that cool hydraulic sit-in car that shook made the extra cost worth every quarter.

37. MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

(Mattel, Intellivision)

One of the first licensed sports

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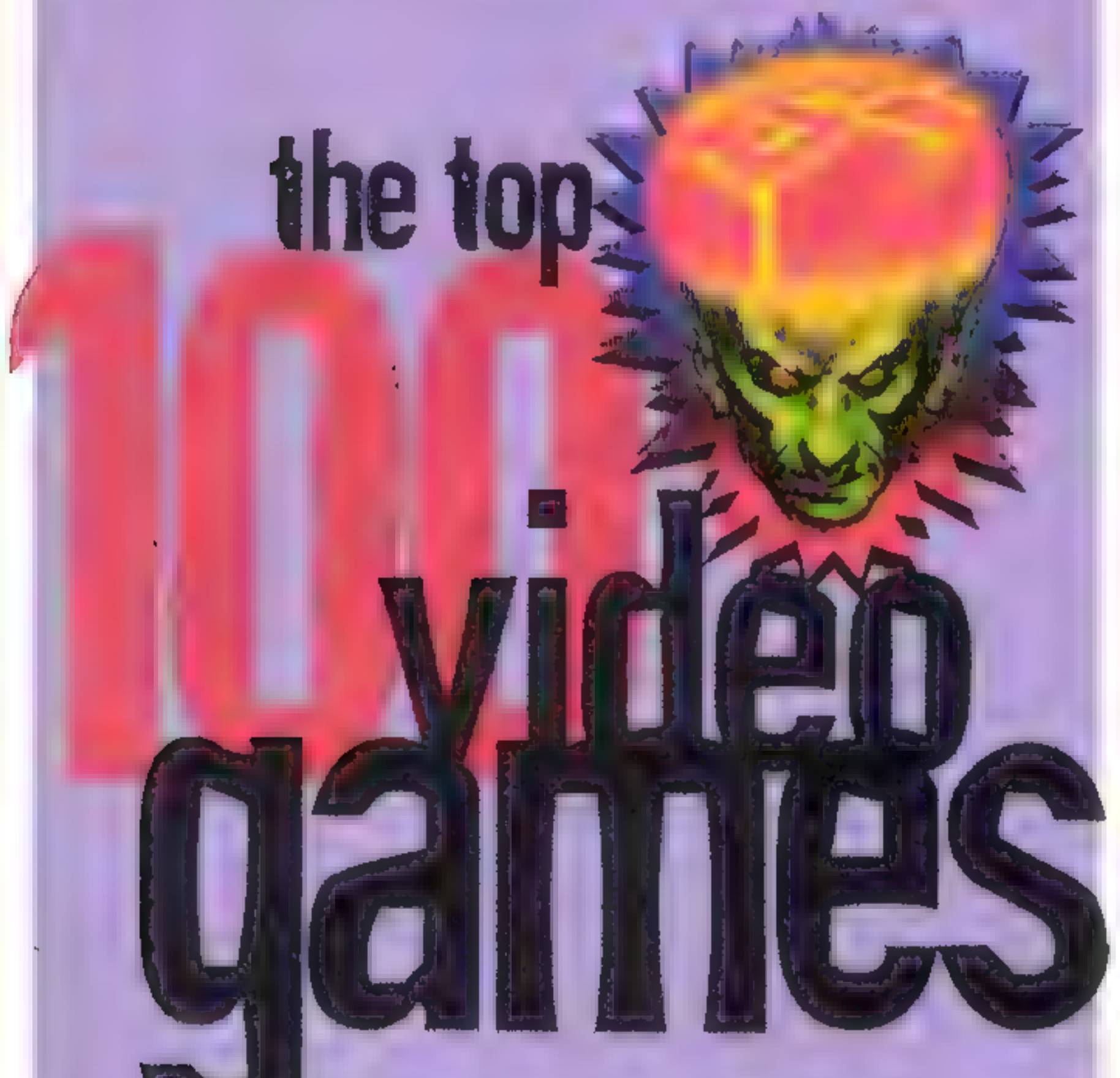
games, *MLB* for the ol' Intellivision featured the most realistic player graphics to date and set the gameplay standard for video baseball. Imagine—being able to control each player on the field individually! Oh, the unbridled power!

38. JUNGLE STRIKE

(Electronic Arts, Genesis)
The second installment in EA's mondo-popular helicopter shooter series is the perfect combo of the too-short first (*Desert Strike*) and too-easy third (*Urban Strike*) versions. It's got nine tough campaigns, a nice selection of vehicles (including a hovercraft and a stealth fighter) and not one, but two psychotic bad guys with plans of world domination.

39. DUKE NUKEM

(Apogee, PC)
Without a doubt, the best platform game for the PC ever created, not to mention one of the best all-around shareware games. With *Duke Nukem*, Apogee took their *Commander Keen*, made it worlds better, and came up with a real winner.



40. SECRET OF MANA

(SquareSoft, SNES)
The storyline of this SNES RPG sometimes makes about as much sense as the Michael Jackson/Lisa Marie Presley marriage, but who needs a logical plot when you get incredible graphics, even more incredible music, and three-player simultaneous action (if you have one of those Super Multitap thingies and a coupla friends)? The combat is fast and furious, and the quest is longer than should be allowed by law.

41. DONKEY KONG

(Nintendo, arcade)
Along with *Pac-Man*, *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids*, the original *Donkey Kong* is one of the granddaddies—one of the big four that started it all. It was the first appearance of Mario (who, of course, went on to other great successes), and single handedly ignited the platform genre.

42. PRINCE OF PERSIA

(Broderbund, Apple II/PC)
Programmer Jordan Mechner created the nifty character animation (the precursor to *Out Of This World* and *Flashback*) by videotaping his kid brother romping on a playground (no, really). The best versions of *Prince Of Persia* are the gore-filled Sega CD version and the heavily enhanced SNES version by Konami.

43. LETHAL ENFORCERS

(Konami, arcade)
Okay, shooting people isn't cool. Well, maybe it is cool. But only when you're doing it to crooks, right? And only on screen, where no one actually gets hurt. (Ed. note to parents and educators: We really, really mean that last sentence.) Where else can you release your violent, antisocial tendencies without becoming a cop or going to jail? Too bad the game's guns come in wussy-ass pink and powder blue.

44. WOLFENSTEIN 3D

(id, PC)
Using a bevy of serious weapons, watch Nazi guards expire in bloody heaps, and hear them scream—in German—as they die. That's cool.

45. KILLER INSTINCT

(Midway, arcade)
Nintendo, Rare (the *Donkey Kong Country* guys) and Midway teamed up to make this graphically stunning, combo-riffic fighter. At the moment, it rules the arcade.

46. STAR RAIDERS

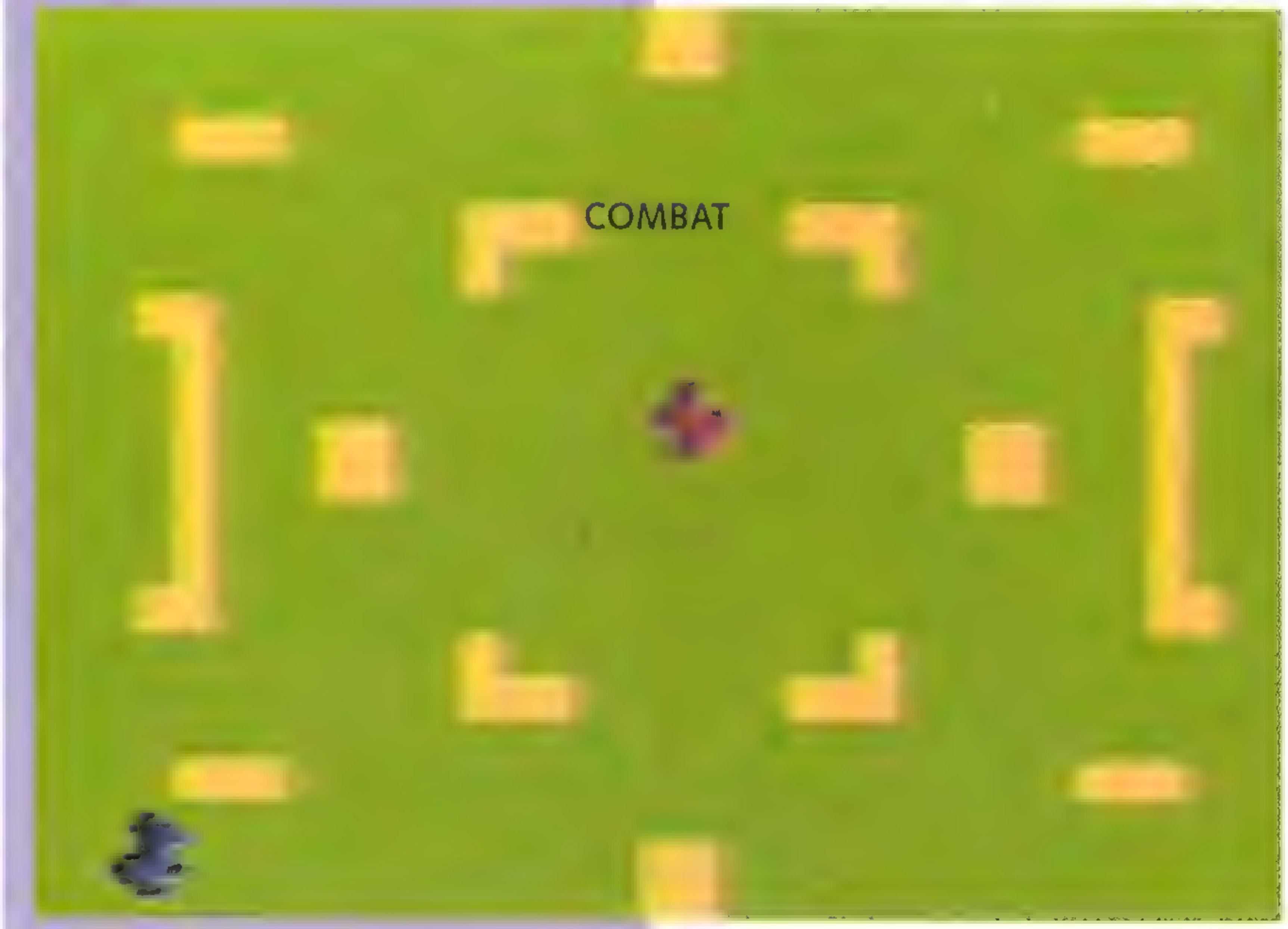
(Atari, Atari 400)
Wing Commander, *Star Voyager*, *X-Wing* and all other first-person space battle games owe it all to *Star Raiders*.

47. DRAGON'S LAIR

(Cinematronics, arcade)
An Advanced Disney & Dragons sort of affair full of comic Don Bluth animation, *Dragon's Lair* was the breakthrough game which allowed you to "play" an animated cartoon. A somewhat frustrating movement-timing factor, but still fun to play and watch.

48. COMBAT

(Atari, Atari 2600)
The original pack-in game for the 2600, *Combat* pitted two players against each other in tanks, biplanes and jet planes in 27 different "game variations" with guided bullets and invisible vehicles, for starters. The graphics were butt-ugly, even for the low-tech 2600, but the game play was 100% pure adrenaline.


COMBAT

49. TRON

(Bally/Midway, arcade)
One of the first multi-engine games and, some would say, still the best. An incredible soundtrack and a tie-in with one helluva cool movie (not to mention a nice, big flight-stick controller) gave this game a ton of well-deserved success. Even many of today's coin-ops can't compete with the mighty *Tron*.

50. MADDEN NFL '95

(Electronic Arts, Genesis)
The best in EA's seemingly endless football series, with tons of plays, two-point conversions, high-stepping animations and even some shameless FOX-TV advertising.

51. ZAXXON

(Sega, arcade)
3/4 perspective blasters like Viewpoint wouldn't exist without Sega's original isometric shooter, *Zaxxon*.

52. ROBOTRON 2084

(Williams, arcade)
The two-joystick terror that made you sweat to survive. No four-way panic shooter's topped it yet.

53. FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

(Electronic Arts, 3DO)
Player-controllable camera angles help make *Fifa* 3DO, without a doubt, the most advanced sports title to date.

54. SUZUKA 8 HRS.

(Namco, arcade)
Climb aboard that mini cycle, grip the handlebars, lean forward and open that throttle real wide. A few laps and you're sweatin' like a pig. Arcade racing at its finest.

55. BERZERK

(Williams, arcade)
One human. A zillion homicidal robots. A bouncing, smiling, unstoppable beach ball from hell. No fancy graphics, no power-ups, no way to win—and everything against

you. Even the walls.

56. PONG

(Atari, arcade)

In the Seventies, there was no *Mortal Kombat*; no *Donkey Kong Country*. Just two lines and a dot. "INSERT COIN. AVOID MISSING BALL FOR SCORE." Yeah.

57. GALAGA

(Bally/Midway, arcade)

When *Space Invaders* became passé, *Galaga* took over. They came from the top, they came from the sides, they came down in groups and sometimes alone, but always in some twisty pattern. One of the best vertical shooters in arcade history, and one that still stands the test of time.

58. INDY 500

(Atari, arcade)

Four black-and-white blocks puttering around non-oval tracks—does this sound anything like the real *Indy 500*? Still, four-player arcade games were unheard of when this one came out, and every driver got their own wheel and gas pedal. Neat.

59. NIGHT DRIVER

(Atari, arcade)

A simple concept: a bunch of white sticks coming at you for a road and a decal stuck on the monitor for a car. Way cool for the Seventies.

60. ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

(Atari, Jaguar)

Point-of-view, maze-crawl fear, the way an *Alien*-based game should be done. Eerie atmosphere, messy deaths, and mood to the max.

61. STAR WARS

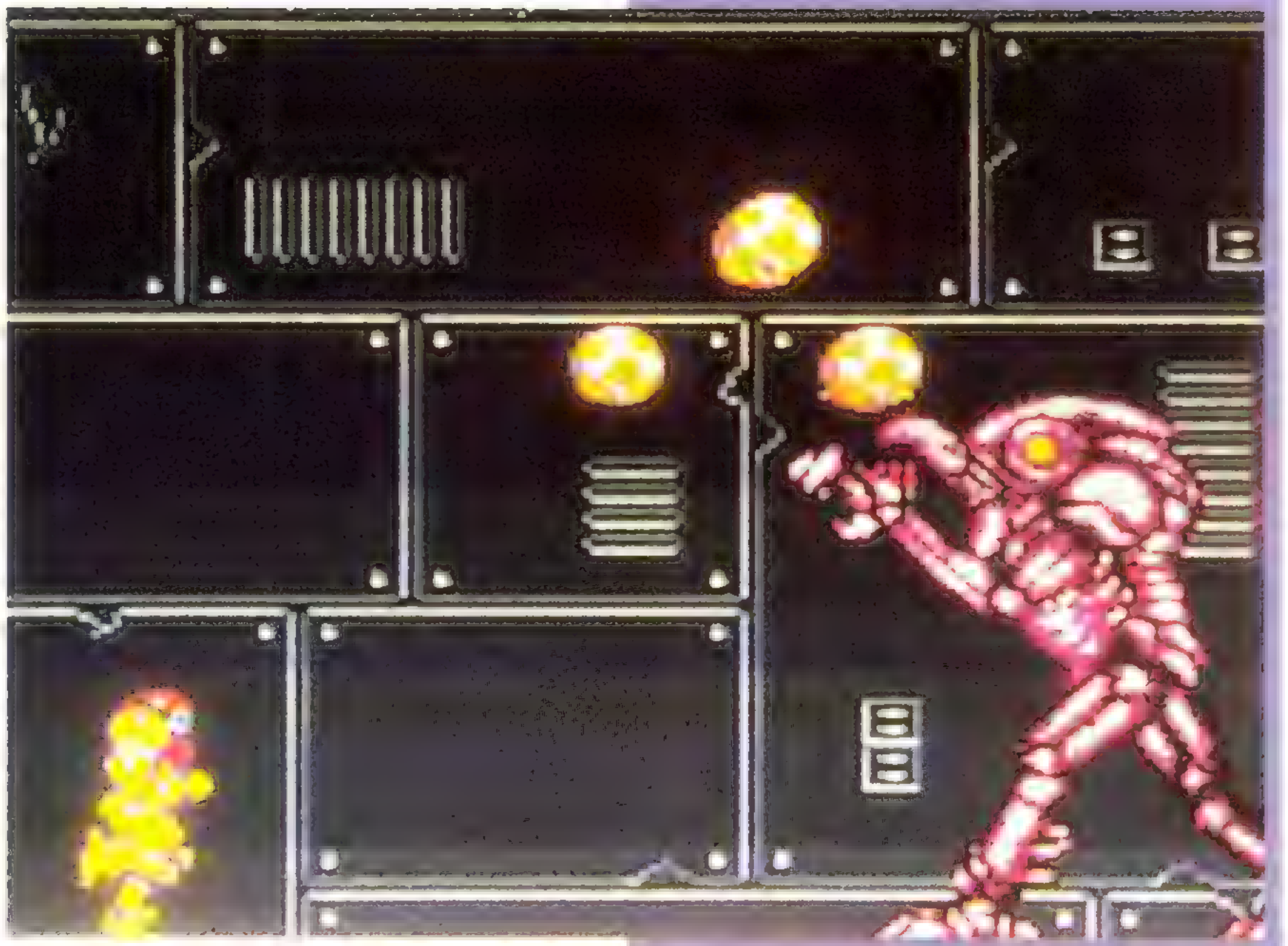
(Atari, arcade)

The sleek vector TIE Fighters zooming by were cool on their own, but with digitized speech clips from the films thrown in with shoot-'em-up frenzy, this early *SW* game ruled. Still does.

62. SUPER METROID

(Nintendo, SNES)

Maybe a little TOO similar to its 8-bit NES mommy, but jam-



packed with challenging game play, haunting atmosphere, secret stuff, and xenomorphs begging to be blasted.

63. CRUIS'N USA

(Midway, arcade)

Nintendo's snazzy Ultra 64 hardware makes its arcade debut in Midway's cross-country racing rally. Rendered fender benders, anyone?

64. SPACE DUNGEON

(Atari, Atari 5200)

One hand controlled the ship, the other fired in all directions while alien beings closed in from all sides. The closest thing to having a *Robotron 2084* machine in your bedroom.

65. TRACK & FIELD

(Konami, arcade)

The best game in the "smash the buttons like you're having an epileptic fit" genre; you always knew if *Track & Field* was in an arcade because you could hear the frantic button-whacking over the background noise.

66. SUPER MARIO BROS.

(Nintendo, NES)

The game that revived the American video game industry and made a star of a short, fat, mustachioed plumber with a freakish vertical leap.

67. MR. DO

(Universal, arcade)

Yeah, it had a stupid-ass name, the main character was a clown, and the whole thing was, like, insane in that peculiarly Japanese way. That's probably why it was so cool.

68. HAUNTED HOUSE

(Atari, Atari 2600)

Wandering ghosts, spiders and other frightening monsters hungry for human flesh—and all you had to defend yourself was a book of matches. Unfair, but totally cool.

69. PHOENIX

(Centuri, arcade)

One of many *Space Invaders* variations, but a good one that featured giant birds swooping down on you.

70. GOLDEN AXE

(Sega, Genesis)

Hack and slash your way across a medieval battlefield, sort of like Streets Of Rage with a blade.

71. SWORDQUEST: EARTHWORLD

(Atari, Atari 2600)

Atari had a four-part, $100,000 *Swordquest* tournament planned, with the primitive RPG *Earthworld* being the first game in the series. *Earthworld* and *Fireworld* made it to the shelves; when the market crashed, *Waterworld* was only released through Atari's fan club and *Airworld* vanished into thin you-know-what. Would have been a great series.

72. SINISTAR

(Williams, arcade)

A truly harrowing arcade classic. You knew that damned death-mask was coming for you, and fifteen hours later you'd hear it croaking "Run, coward!" in your dreams.

73. OUT OF THIS WORLD

(Interplay, Genesis/3DO)

Another giant leap in cinematic gameplay, every bit as cool and smooth as the later *Flashback*, but far weirder. Highly recommended.

74. TERMINATOR 2: JUDGEMENT DAY

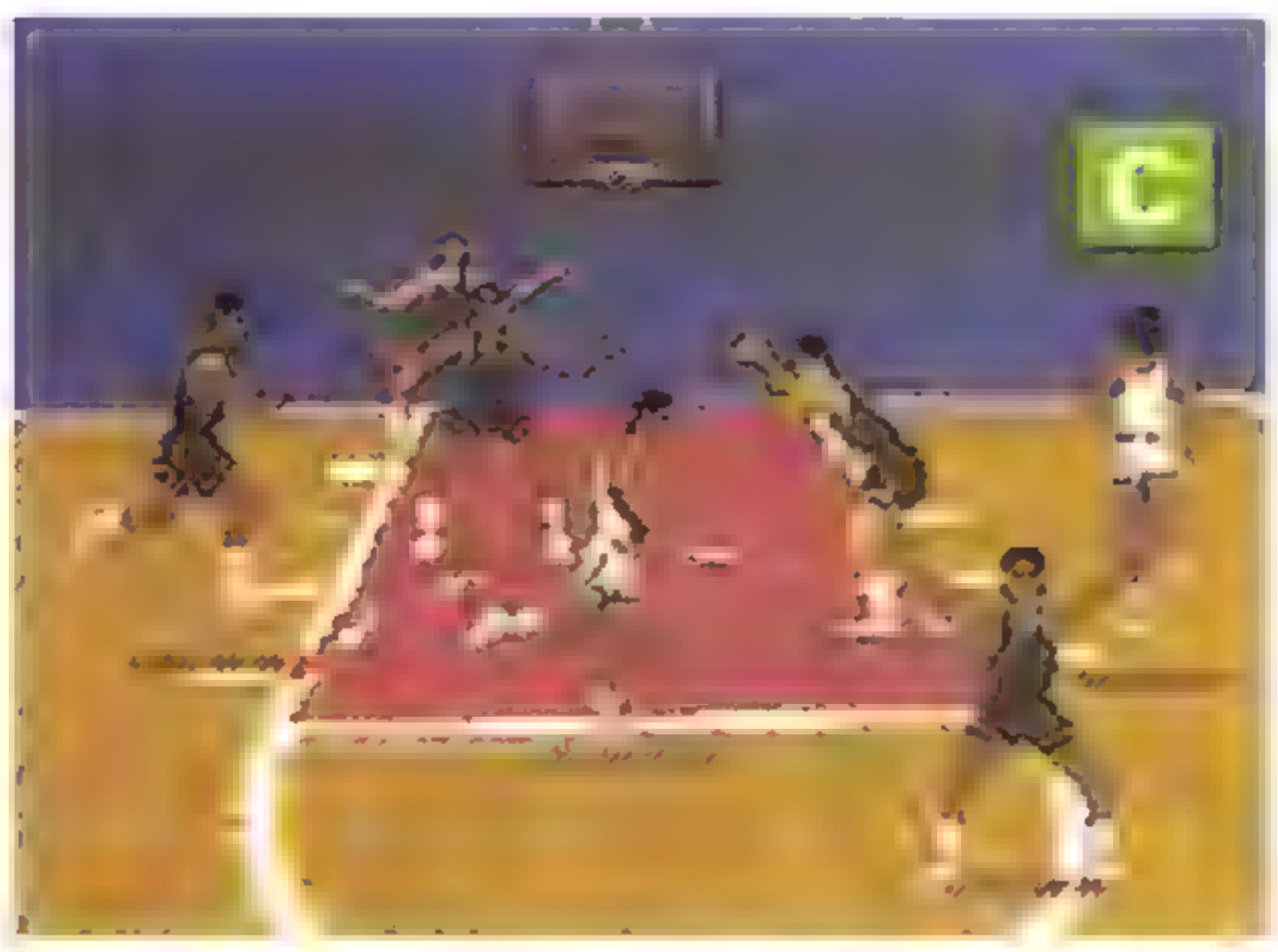
(Midway, arcade)

As if a horde of T-800 Endoskeletons aiming at your head wasn't enough, the *T2* game featured the fleshier stars of the film, too, plus digitized clips from Ah-nuld's lips. One of the best movie adaptations ever, and the current gun-game standard.

75. NCAA BASKETBALL

(Nintendo, SNES)

Mode 7 graphics, dozens of college b-ball teams from five major conferences, and best of all, no balding loudmouths shouting "Awesome, baby!" every three minutes.



76. LUNAR

(Working Designs, Sega CD)

The best RPG that will ever be for the Sega CD, featuring a greatly amusing story filled with pop-culture references and double entendres that got past the censor-weasels at Sega.

the top 100 video games

77. ESCAPE FROM THE MINDMASTER

(Starpath Corp., Atari 2600 Starpath Supercharger adapter)
Not many people ever experienced the Starpath Supercharger add-on system for the 2600, but those who did will remember popping in that cassette tape—yes, tape—of *Escape From The MindMaster*. In what could legitimately be called the precursor to *Wolfenstein 3D* and *DOOM*, *MindMaster*, with its first-person perspective, made you feel like a rat in a maze—and never let you forget that someone, or something, was watching over you. A creepy and claustrophobic classic.

78. WARLORDS

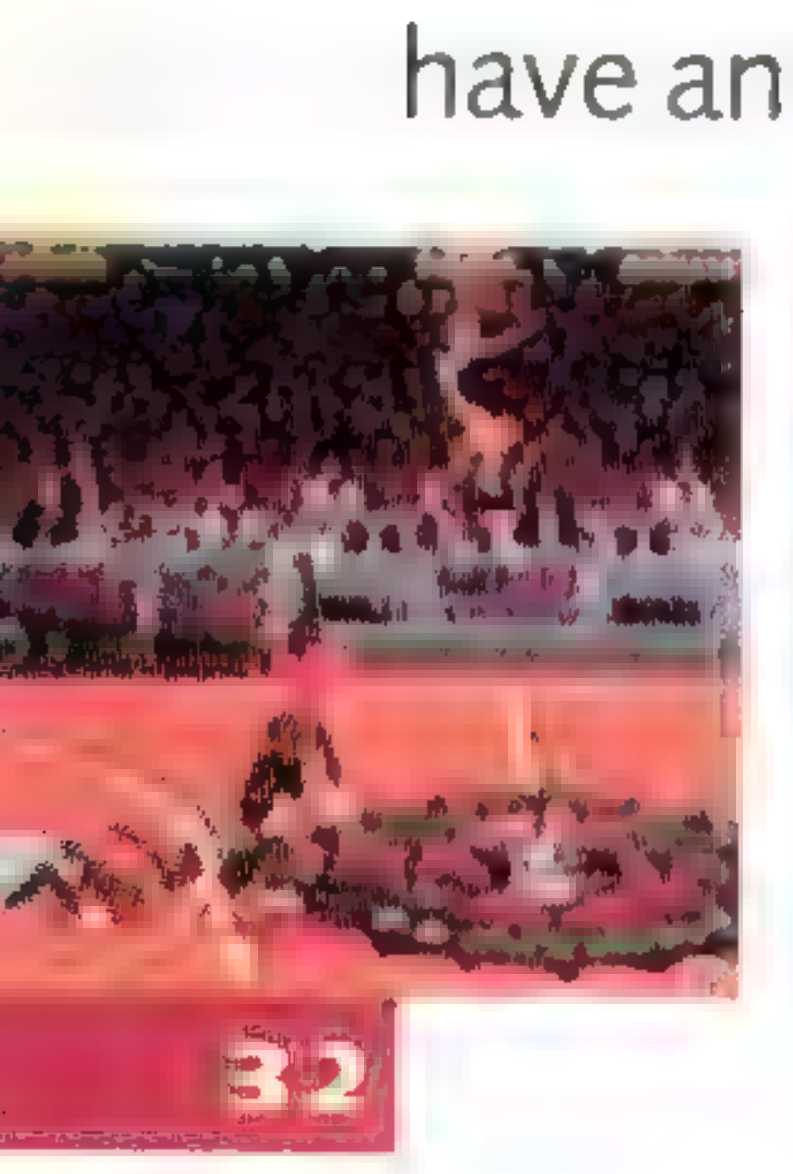
(Atari, Atari 2600)
Classic 4-player challenge and still the ultimate party game, *Warlords* was *Breakout* taken to the next level.

79. 720°

(Atari, arcade)
Video skateboarding! Earn cash by doing tricks—real ones like McTwists and air-to-fakies, as well as practicing in local parks and playin' in traffic. Unbelievably addicting and completely unique for its time.

80. SAMURAI SHODOWN

(SNK, arcade)
A very Japanese, very bloody fighting game in which every character wields a blade weapon; a few characters also have animals to sic on their foes.



81. TOMCAT ALLEY

(Sega, Sega CD)
A full-motion video game that doesn't suck, thanks to decent interactivity, semi-randomized game play, and the hot pilot babe.

82. JUNGLE HUNT

(Taito, arcade)
The game that introduced the concept of being able to do different things from level to level and definitely the coolest of its era. Crocodile paté, anyone?

83. STAR CASTLE

(Cinematronics, arcade)
One of the all-time great vector graphics classics with a unique (and maddening) concept: fly around the perimeter and shoot inwards at an enemy ship surrounded by rotating polygons. As a bonus, the stars in the background outlined the figure of a certain Playboy centerfold. Yes!

84. WIZARD OF WOR

(Bally/Midway, arcade)
There was a time when talking video games were thought to be a sign of the apocalypse. And *Wizard Of Wor* was the coolest of the cool.

85. KABOOM!

(Activision, Atari 2600)
So simple and addictive: a mad bomber drops explosives at an ever-increasing speed and you catch 'em in water buckets before they hit the bottom of the screen and go boom.

86. MOON PATROL

(Williams, arcade)
Has anyone gotten that funky little moonbouncin' tune out of their head yet?

87. RIVER RAID

(Activision, Atari 2600)
Miles upon miles of scenery and a seemingly infinite amount of enemies into a tiny 8k 2600 cart.

88. XEVIOUS

(Atari, arcade)
Xevious ushered in a new age of scrolling overhead shooters in '84 with its detailed graphics, multi-level targets and catchy theme music.

89. GAUNTLET

(Atari, arcade)
Four-person medieval questing with a few RPG elements thrown in, like hit points and magic abilities, and a great speech chip: "Warrior needs food...badly." "Valkyrie...is about to diiiie." Plus, you got to fight Death—and win.

90. YARS' REVENGE

(Atari, Atari 2600)
Star Castle with bugs, but without the babe outline.

91. KARATE CHAMP

(Data East, arcade)
The very first one-on-one fighting game. Combinations of the simple controls (joystick plus one punch and one kick button) offered special martial arts attacks for skilled fighters, but many players thought they were too hard. Heh.

92. IMPOSSIBLE MISSION

(Epyx, Commodore 64)
Okay, so you're a secret agent that may not be a snappy dresser and sounds a bit too much like Kermit the Frog, but looks don't count when you've got to outwit your way through a whole skyscraper filled with killer robots.

93. SUPER BREAKOUT

(Atari, Atari 5200)
Vertical *Pong* with bricks, but still an addictive thrill that required gobs of hand-eye coordination and jackrabbit-quick reflexes.

94. QIX

(Taito, arcade)
Speaking of games that felt like school [see *Tetris*], *Qix* had you deviously thinking about "areas" and "percentages" before you even knew it—and, as a testament to how fun it was, you never even cared.

95. CRYSTAL CASTLES

(Atari, arcade)
The adventures of Bently Bear set a new standard, the isometric view—and how 'bout that glowing red trackball?

96. STAR BLADE

(Namco, arcade)
A magnified-screen sit-down coin-op with an awesome sense of size. Too bad your ship was on rails.

97. TURMOIL

(20th Century Fox, Atari 2600)
The 2600 equivalent of *Tempest*. Hordes of aliens, rapid firepower and an acute sense of claustrophobia—no wonder it was addictive as hell.

98. CROSSBOW

(Exidy, arcade)
Fend off the bad guys so you can nail the good guys yourself. A true harbinger of future arcade hits.

99. MARBLE MADNESS

(Atari, arcade)
You're a marble! You roll around and try not to get wasted by Killer Slinkies! Does this game rule, or what?

100. ECCO THE DOLPHIN

(Sega, Sega CD)
Another title that wins merely on the virtue of atmosphere. The eerie music, the sad dolphin song, the rich underwater look. Proof that you don't need explosions, Fatalities or a celebrity endorsement to make a great game.

the 25 all-time worst video games

1. E.T. (2600)
2. Pengo (arcade)
3. Q•Bert (arcade)
4. Football (arcade)
5. Rebel Assault (Sega CD)
6. Time Killers (arcade)
7. Warpspeed (Genesis)
8. Kangaroo (arcade)
9. Journey (arcade)
10. Shadow: War Of Succession (3DO)
11. Indiana Jones (2600)
12. Dig Dug (arcade)
13. Combat Cars (Genesis)
14. Mad Dog McCree (Sega CD)
15. Food Fight (arcade)
16. Home Alone (Genesis)
17. Beavis And Butt-Head (Genesis/SNES)
18. Cobra Command (Sega CD)
19. Wayne's World (Genesis/SNES)
20. Make Your Own Video: Power Factory Featuring C&C Music Factory (Sega CD)
21. Bram Stoker's Dracula (Sega CD)
22. Frogger (arcade)
23. F117 Nightstorm (Genesis)
24. Basic Programming (2600)
25. Silpheed (Sega CD)

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banding

Is Mortal Kombat II no longer a challenge?

Tired of whuppin' the computer in NBA Jam?

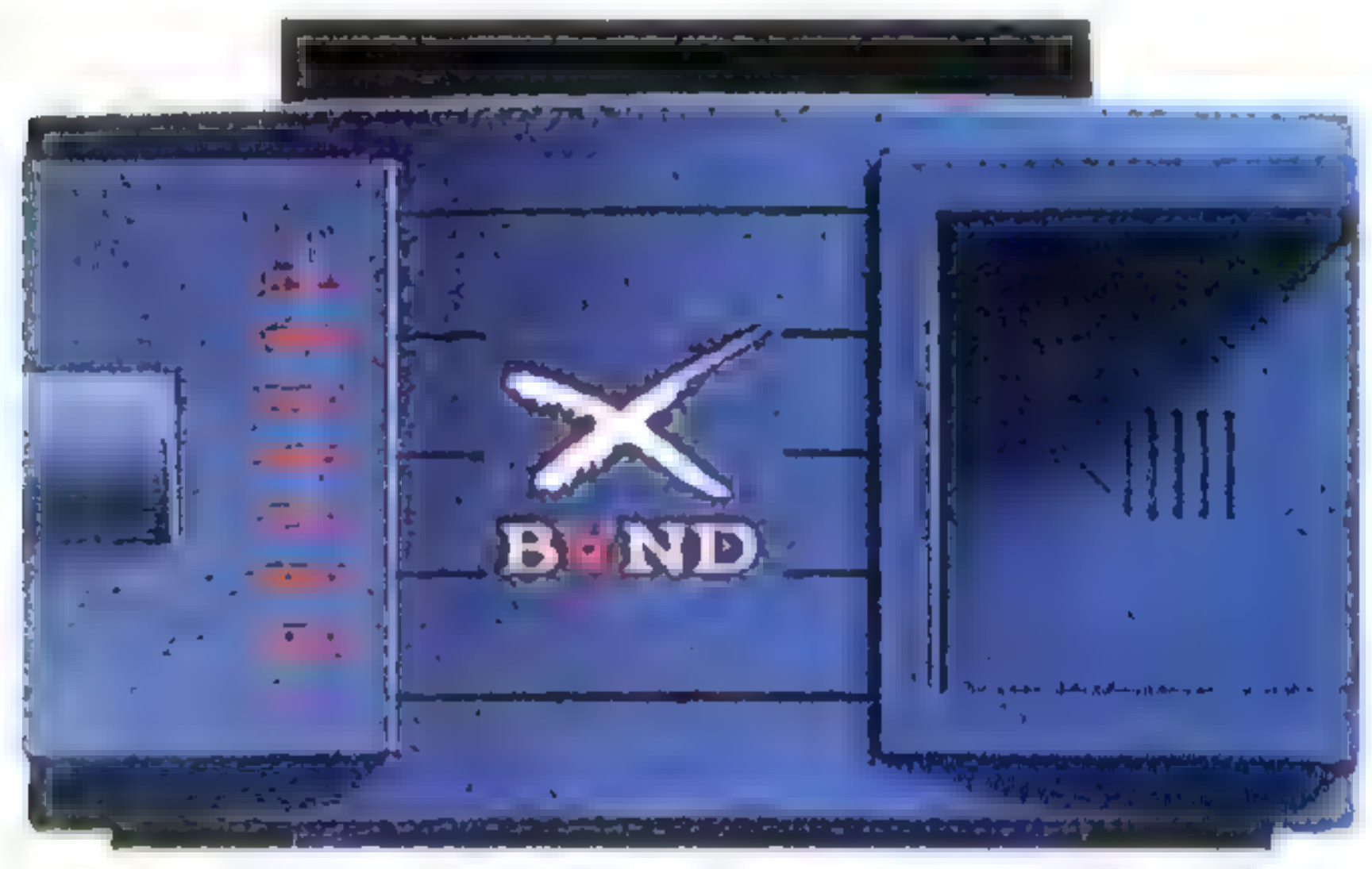
Well, fret no longer.

With the XBAND VIDEO GAME MODEM, predictable computer opponents are a thing of the past.

Okay. It's March, 1995. By now you've kicked the computer's butt in Madden '95 so many times, Big John probably cries in his nachos every time you let loose a 40-yard bomb. While the satisfaction one derives from repeatedly beating the crap out of the computer is a unique thrill, the fact remains that it doesn't take much time before your favorite sports cart no longer poses a challenge to your gaming skills. If this happens to you every time the new Madden or NHL carts rolls off the assembly lines, Catapult's XBAND Video Game Modem might be the answer.

By plugging the XBAND modem into either a Genesis or SNES game system (and plugging a phone line into the XBAND), you and another gamer anywhere else in the country can go head-to-head in such games as *NHL '95*, *NBA Jam*, *Mortal Kombat II* and *NBA Live '95*. Playing on the XBAND Network eliminates computer predictability and adds a fresh spin to even those games you *think* you've conquered.

But while the XBAND is a truly innovative and ingenious peripheral, most gamers don't quite get the concept of gaming over phone lines. In an effort to dispel some of the most frequently circulated rumors and myths regarding the XBAND, FLUX has assembled this list of often asked questions—and the answers. Get it? Good. See ya online.



- **How much does the XBAND Video Game Modem cost?**

Both the Sega Genesis and SNES versions are available for about $69.99.

- **What systems is it available for?**

Sega Genesis and Super NES.

- **Will it work with any Genesis/Sega CD configuration? What about the 32X? Sega CDX?**

Yes. Yes. Yes.

- **Will any game work with the XBAND?**

Nice try, but no: only those games made available through the XBAND Network will work.

- **What games are available?**

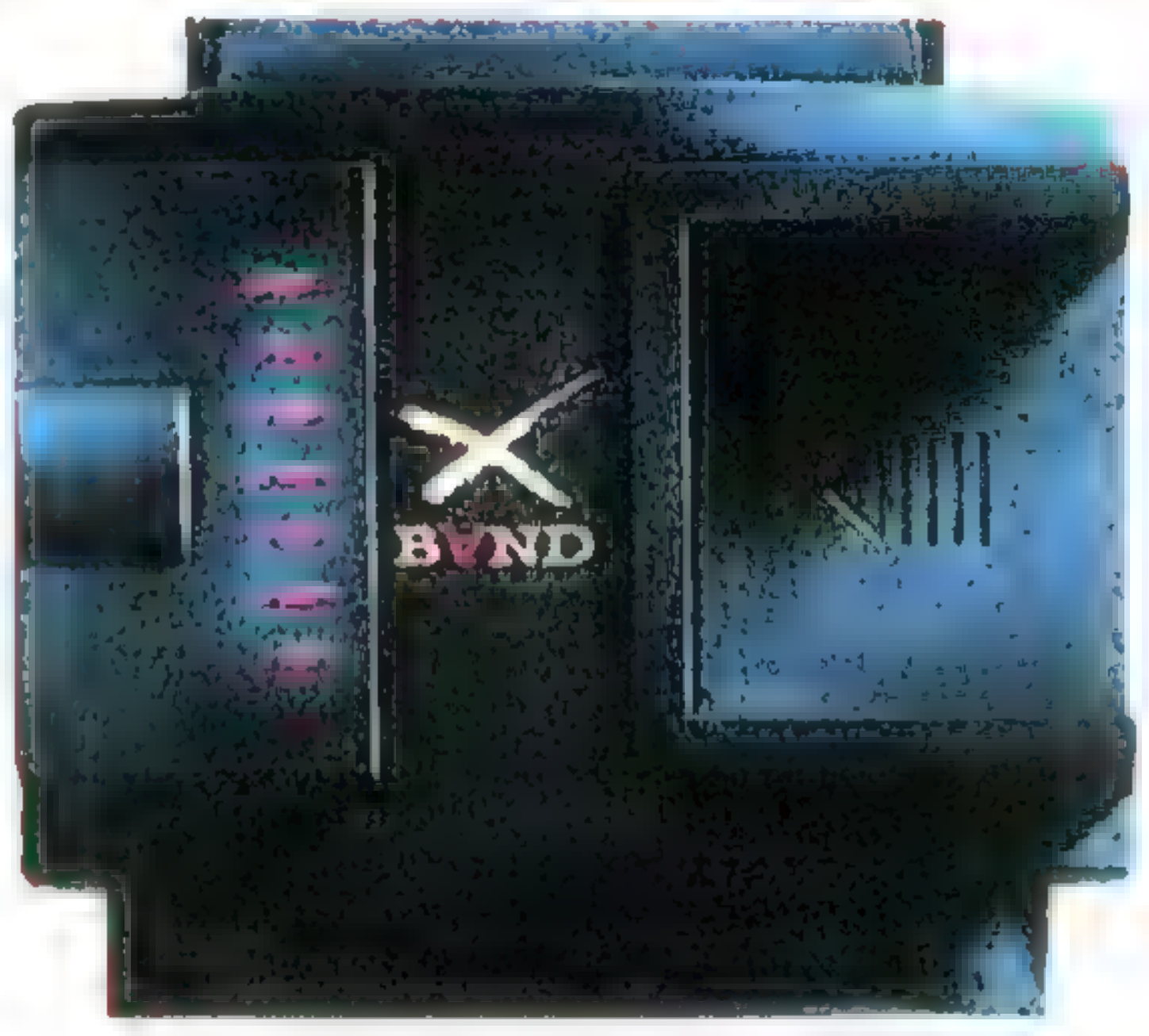
New games are being added regularly, but the following games are currently compatible with the Genesis XBAND: Mortal Kombat, Mortal Kombat II, Madden NFL '95, NHL '95, NBA Live '95, Super Street Fighter II, NFL '95 *and* NBA Jam. *Since the Genesis is generally hailed as the sports gamers system of choice, games available for the Super NES XBAND modem may or may not be the same as those for the Genesis XBAND. MKII and SSFII are slated for the SNES version launch, with more to come. Perhaps* Donkey Kong Country?

- **Do I need an additional modem to play games on the XBAND network?**

No—the XBAND is a modem. All you need to start playing is a Genesis or SNES system, the right games and a phone line.

- **Do I need a second phone line?**

Nope. If you only have one line, just unplug the cord from a standard phone and plug it into the XBAND modem. Piece o' cake.



- **Does it tie up my phone?**

Yes, but if you have Call Waiting, you can set your XBAND account to have your game interrupted (but not ruined) when a call comes in. You can't, however, make outgoing calls while you're on the XBAND network. Tell your sister to use the pay phone at the gas station.

- **How much is a subscription?**

For $7.95 a month, you get 32 play credits. For each additional time you connect, it'll cost 15 cents per credit (this is only for the additional connect charge—if you want to keep replaying the same opponent after the initial "Challenge" match, it's free.). Or, you can buy XBAND debit cards that come with pre-paid credits; stick the card into the slot on the front of the modem and the network will draw credits from it.

- **Do the phone calls cost extra?**

It depends on how you configure the system when you first sign on to XBAND. You can set it so that the XBAND only searches for players in your local calling area, but if you wish to play a friend outside of your area code, you can set it so that it will connect you to long distance opponents.

- **Can I talk to the person I'm playing?**

By entering a "chat mode" when your game is finished, you can use your joypad and the on-screen keyboard to type in a message to the person you just played. Of course, you can also use the "XMAIL" area to send an email-style message to any player, any time (if you have their selected character name—real names are not used). A separate keyboard will be available soon (hopefully before your hands fall off). With your XBAND

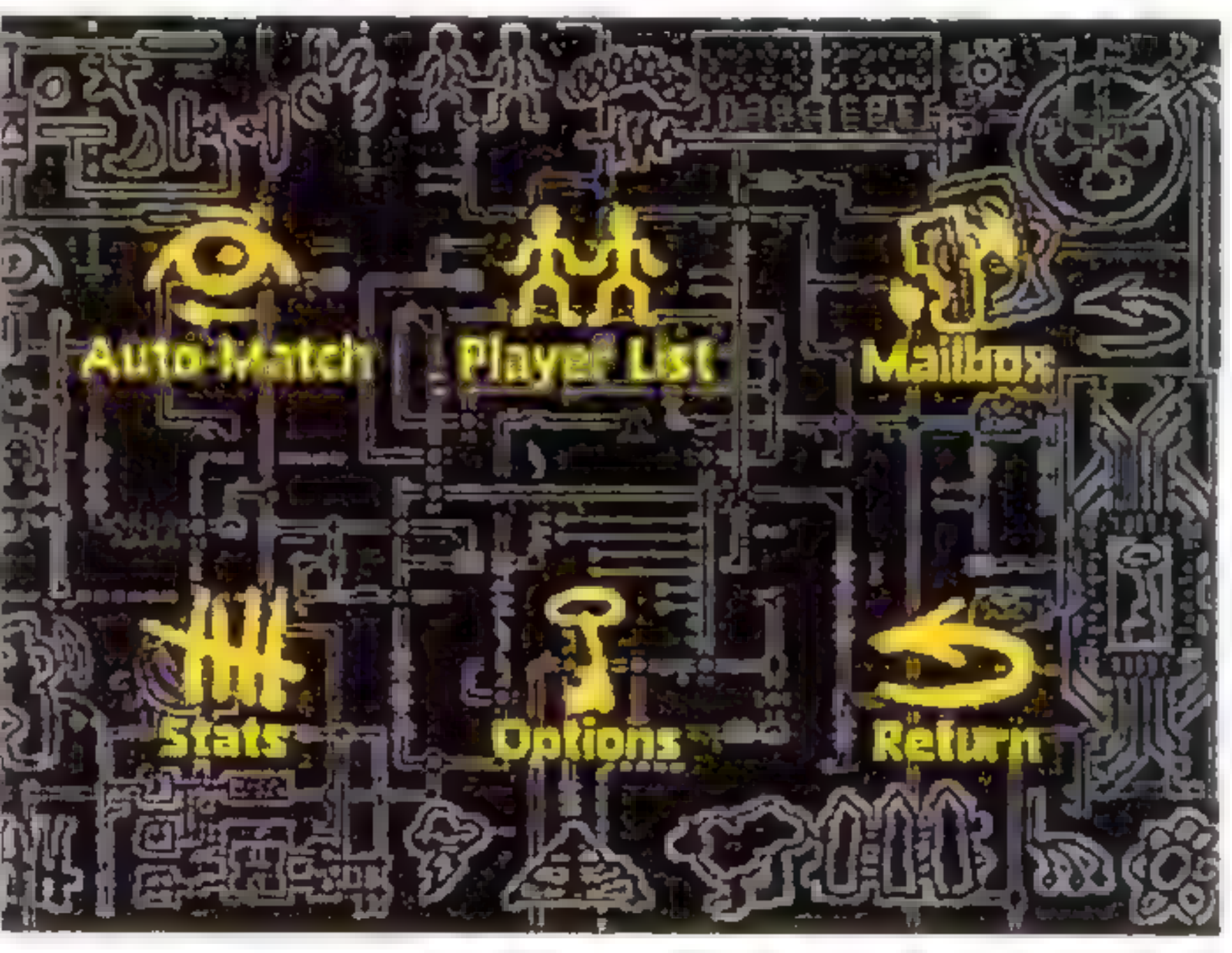
together

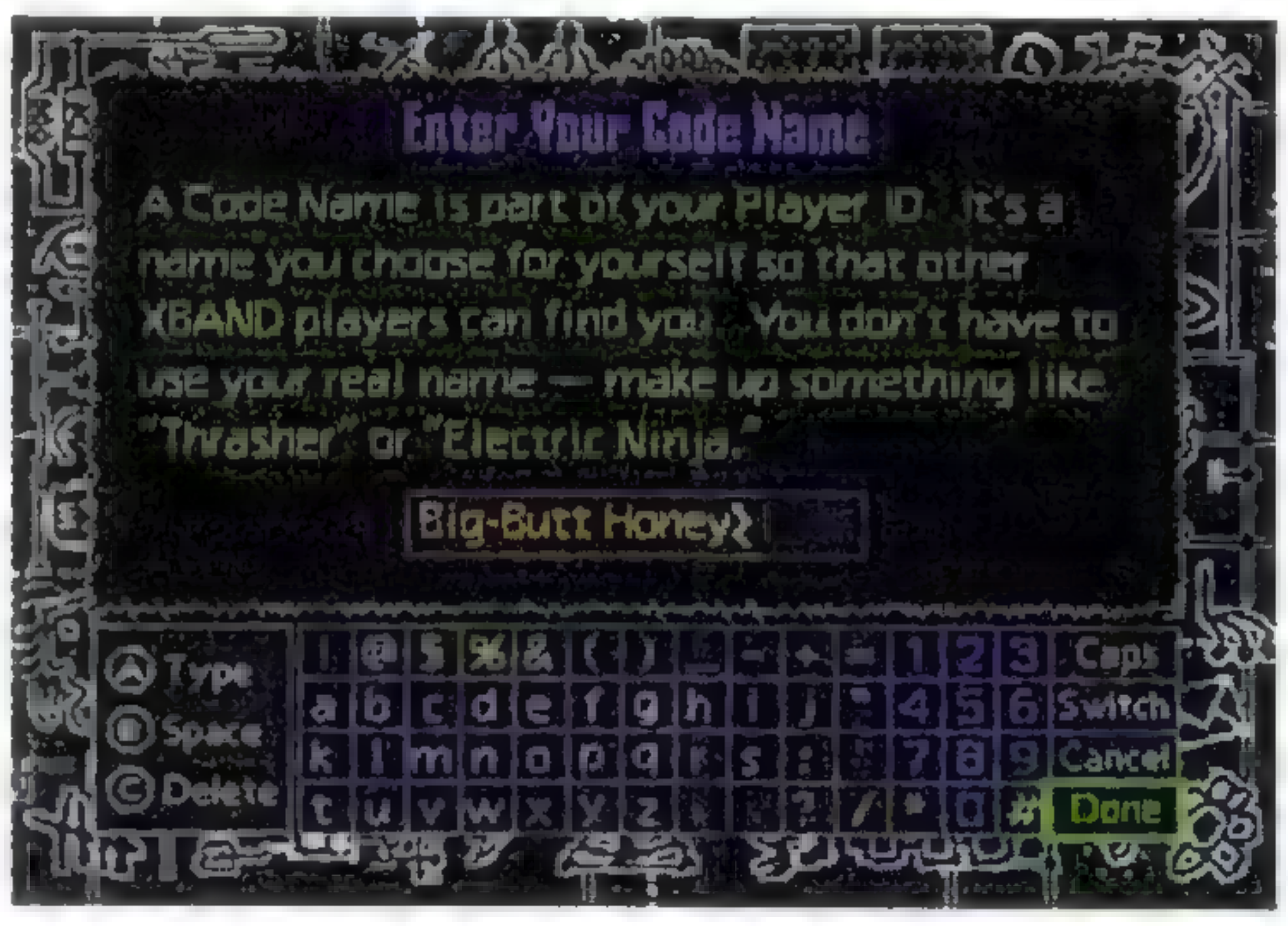
account, you automatically get an Internet email address (codename@xband.com), so you can send email to each other via your home computers.

• Can I find out my ranking against other gamers on the network?
Yes. The XBAND saves all your stats (meaning your win/loss record, not stats within each game) and ranks players by game title. You can access this information at any time.

• What else can I do with the XBAND?
Aside from sending/receiving messages and checking your rank in the standings, you can check out "Bandwith," XBAND's on-line magazine. The electronic magazine features video game and entertainment industry info, including game tips and announcements, music news and reviews, sports updates, etc. Plus, XBAND is in the process of holding their first major tournament; the winner for each game gets a cool $1000. Watch for more tournaments every so often.

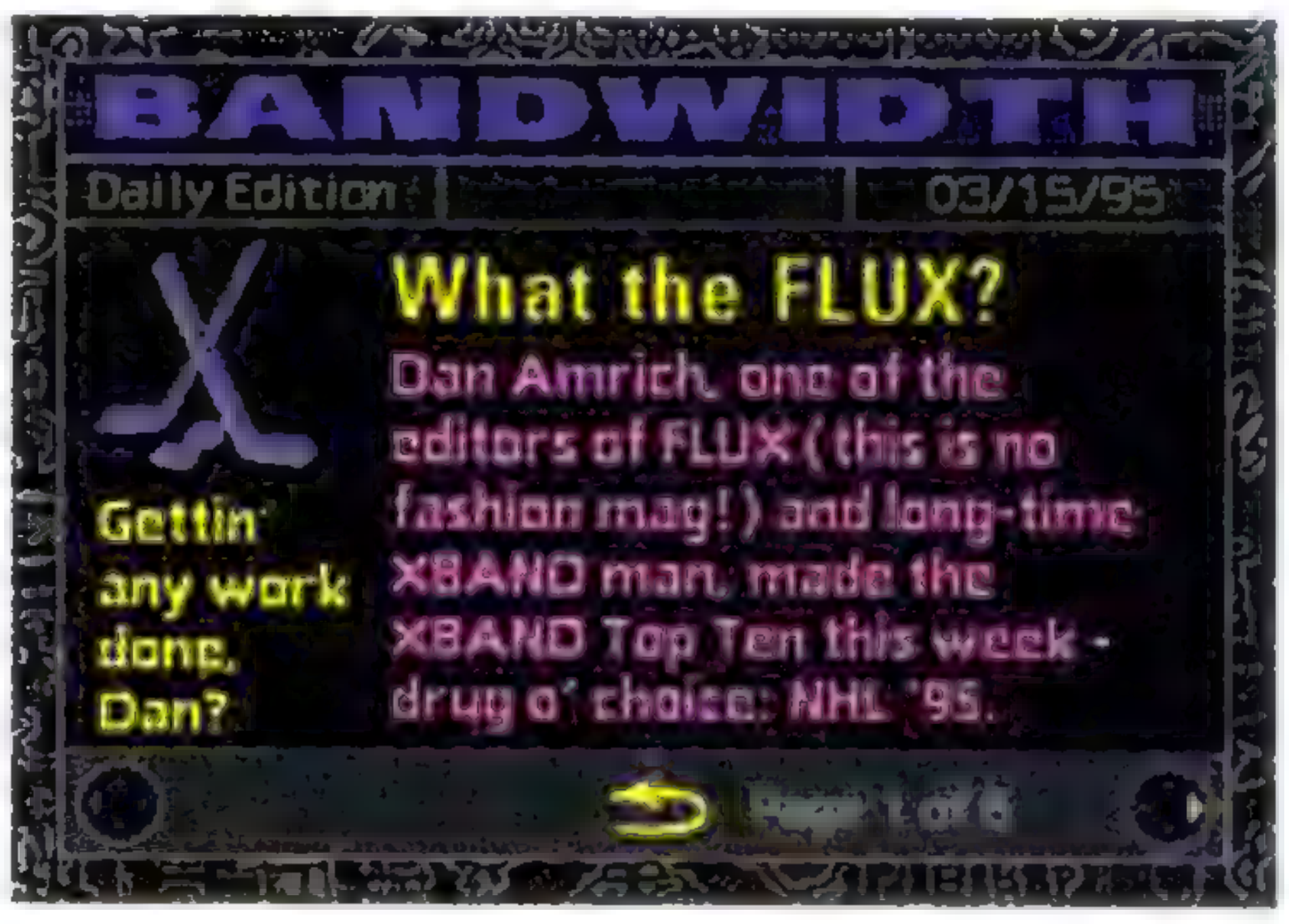
• How do I search for an opponent?
You don't—the XBAND network does all the searching for you. Just plug in, hit "Challenge," and an opponent should be found for you within 10 minutes. If you want to play someone specific, enter their name on your "Player List," highlight their name and tell the XBAND to dial that person.




Enter Your Code Name

A Code Name is part of your Player ID. It's a name you choose for yourself so that other XBAND players can find you. You don't have to use your real name — make up something like "Thrasher" or "Electric Ninja."

Big-Butt Honey

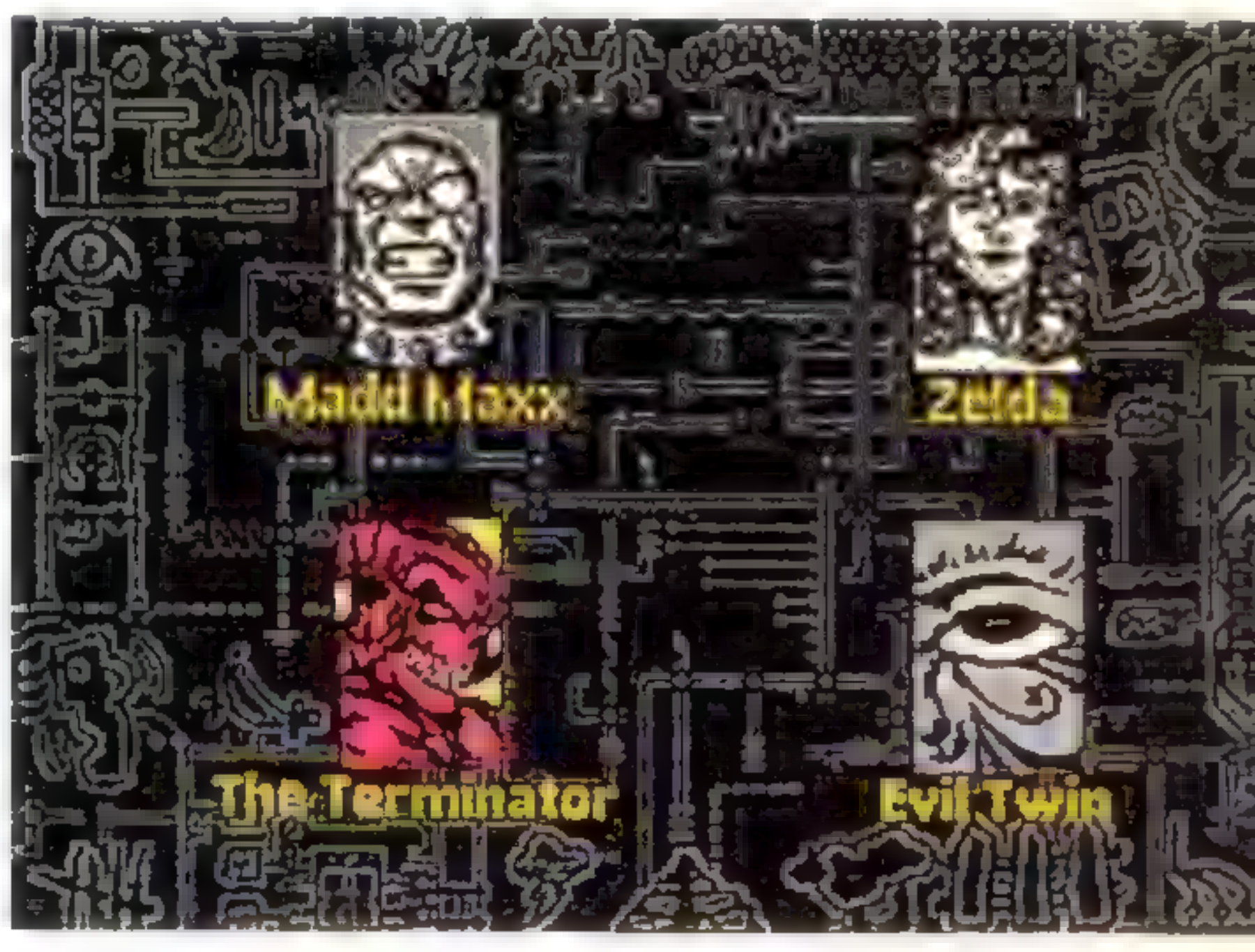

BANDWIDTH

Daily Edition 03/15/95

What the FLUX?

Dan Amrich, one of the editors of FLUX (this is no fashion mag!) and long-time XBAND man, made the XBAND Top Ten this week - drug o' choice: NHL '95.

Gettin' any work done, Dan?



• When are the best times to search for an opponent?
It varies, but generally any time between 3 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. are when most gamers are on-line and searching for opponents.

• What if there's no one wanting to play when I want to play? Do I get charged?
If the XBAND network is unable to find an opponent for you, it'll stop searching after ten minutes and ask you to try again later. If an opponent is not found, you will not be charged a credit.

• How many people own an XBAND?
Thousands of XBANDs have been sold since it first appeared late last year, which means you usually won't have problems finding an opponent during peak hours.

Dialing XBAND...
XBAND™
Welcome to XBAND!!!

• What's the most popular game on the network?
By far, the game being played most regularly on the XBAND network is EA's Madden '95. The XBAND logs in anywhere between 9,000 and 15,000 Madden '95 connections each day!

• So why would I want to play against someone I don't know, when I can just play the computer anytime I want for free?
As former XBAND skeptics, we thought the same thing. But once we hooked up to XBAND, we quickly realized that playing the computer in games like NBA Jam, Madden '95 and NHL '95 over and over can, after a while, become too predictable. Playing against real opponents adds a fresh new challenge to games you think you've mastered.

• If the XBAND is a modem, why can't I just use it to dial my friends so we can play games? Why do I have to dial into the XBAND network and pay in order to play someone?
Don't forget, you're paying for the ability to play these games via modem in the first place. Games like Jam and Madden weren't programmed with the XBAND in mind, so the network has to patch the code to make modem play possible. Without XBAND, you and a friend could never connect and play one of those games together.

• Does the person on the other end have to have a copy of the same cartridge, or can we both play on one copy?
Sorry, ya both have to have the game you want to play.

• Do the games play any slower since they have to move over phone lines?
Surprisingly, no. The XBAND modems were stock 9600 baud models before they were radically altered to make sure the games looked and responded as if they weren't over a modem. You might notice a slight difference, but not enough to throw off your game.

• How do people know that they're playing against me, and not just some number? *Before you sign onto XBAND for the first time, you'll be able to pick your online personality—an alias, a picture that represents you (there are about 50 cartoon-like drawings of various characters at the moment) and a "taunt" that you write that your opponent will read when you connect with them. How people see you from that point on is up to you. You can also change your name, icon and info at any time.*

screen shockz

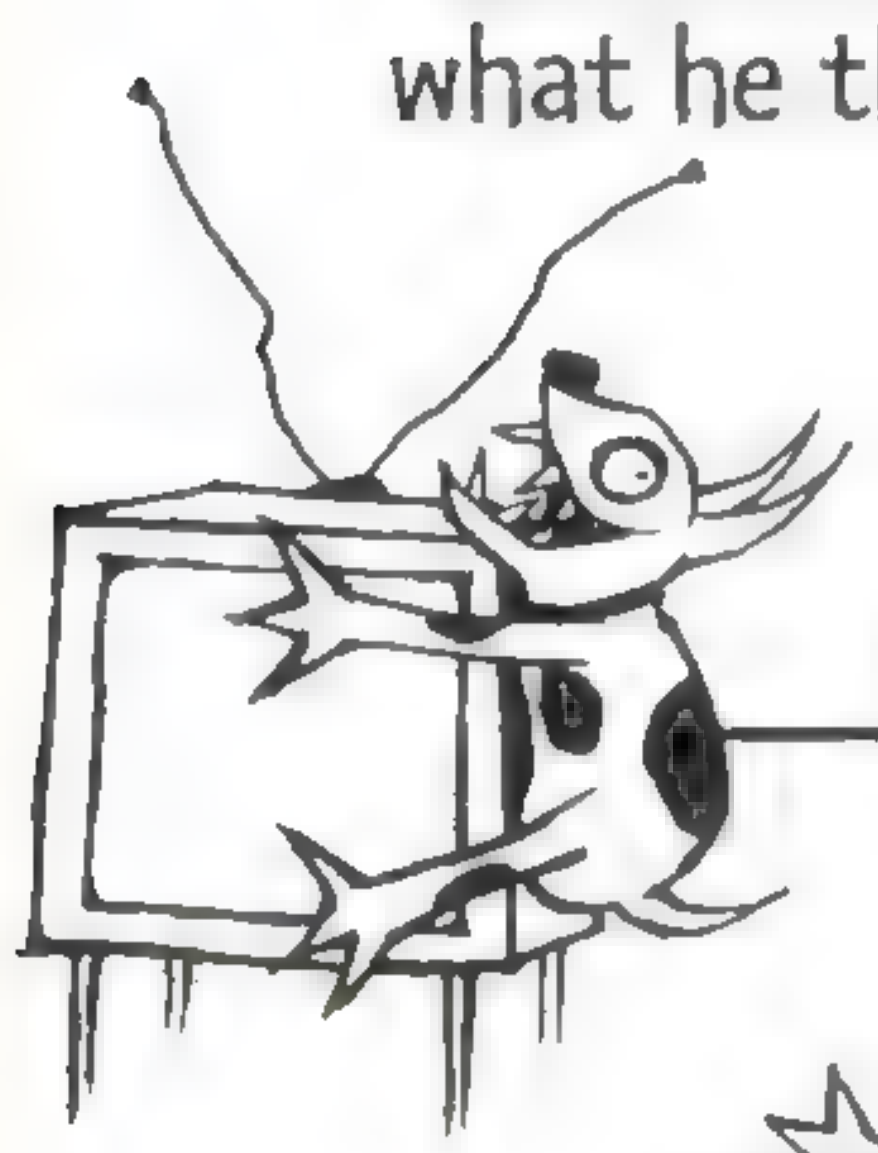
screen shockz

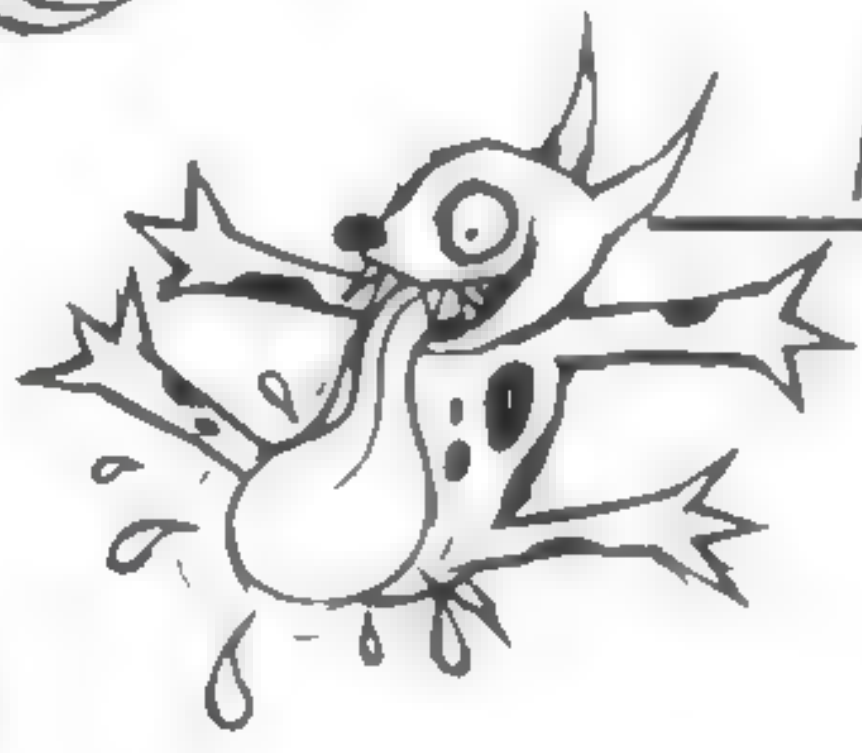
screen shockz

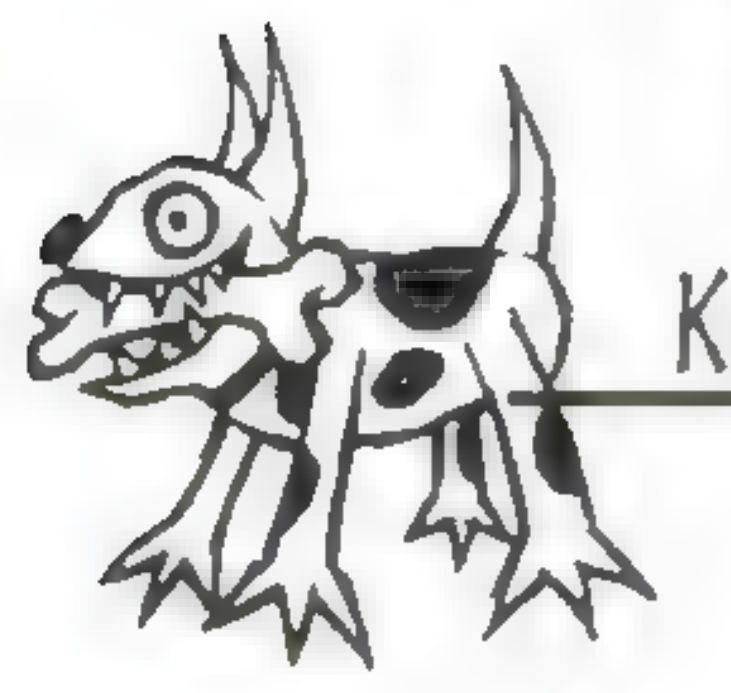
Reviews of the latest Genesis, SNES, 32X, Sega CD, Jaguar, 3DO and PC games

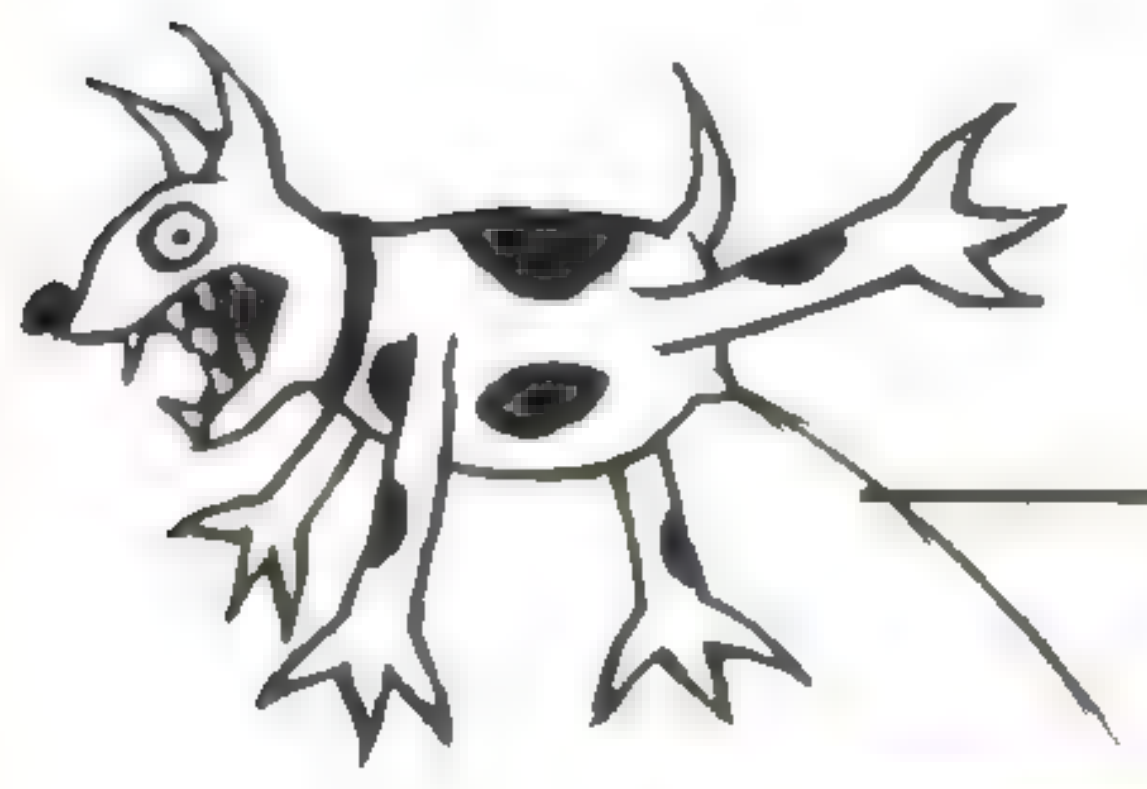
GUIDE DOG

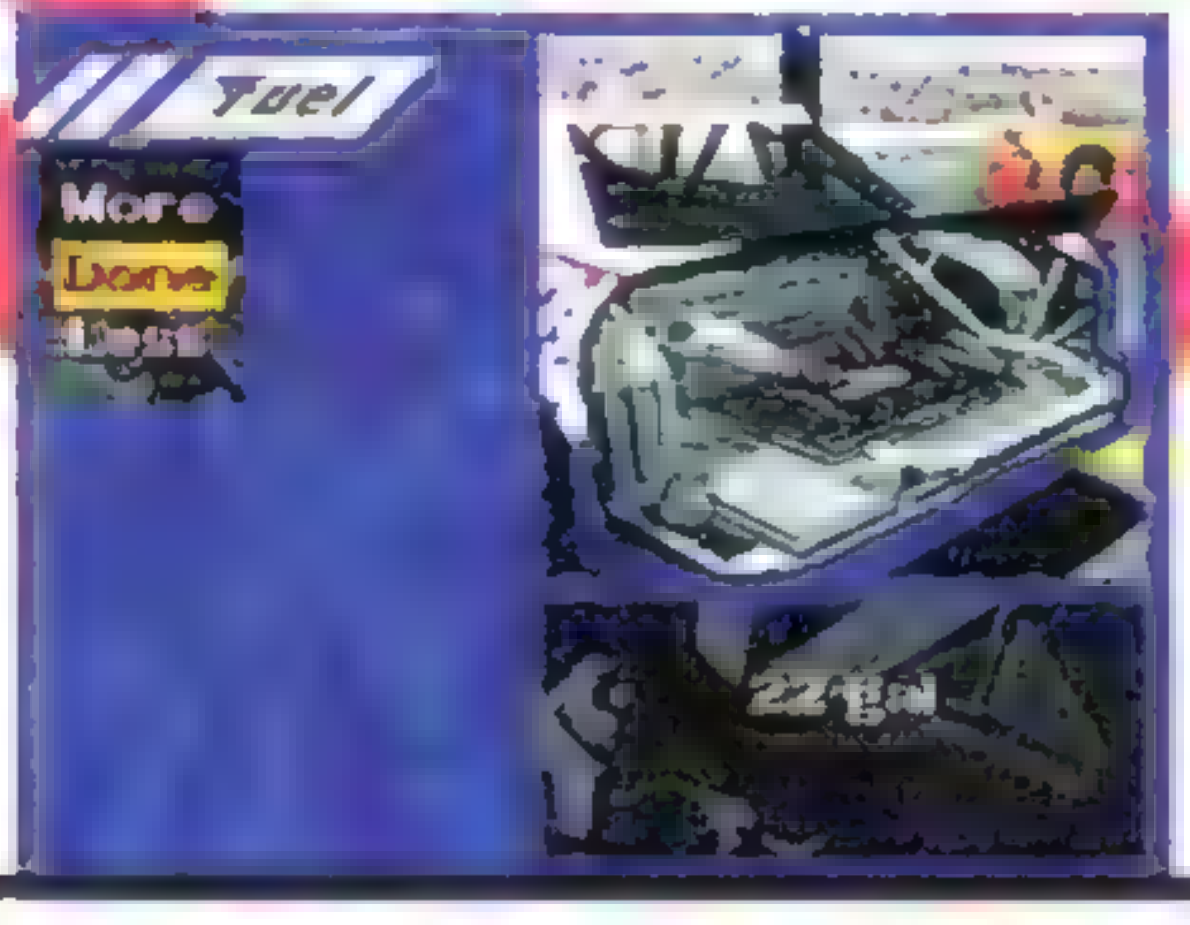
You ask yourself: Just what the hell is that dog doing next to each FLUX video game review? Well, he's our new mascot (turn to page six to find out what happened to Fluxman), and he's here to show you—through various acts of canine perversion—what he thinks of each game.

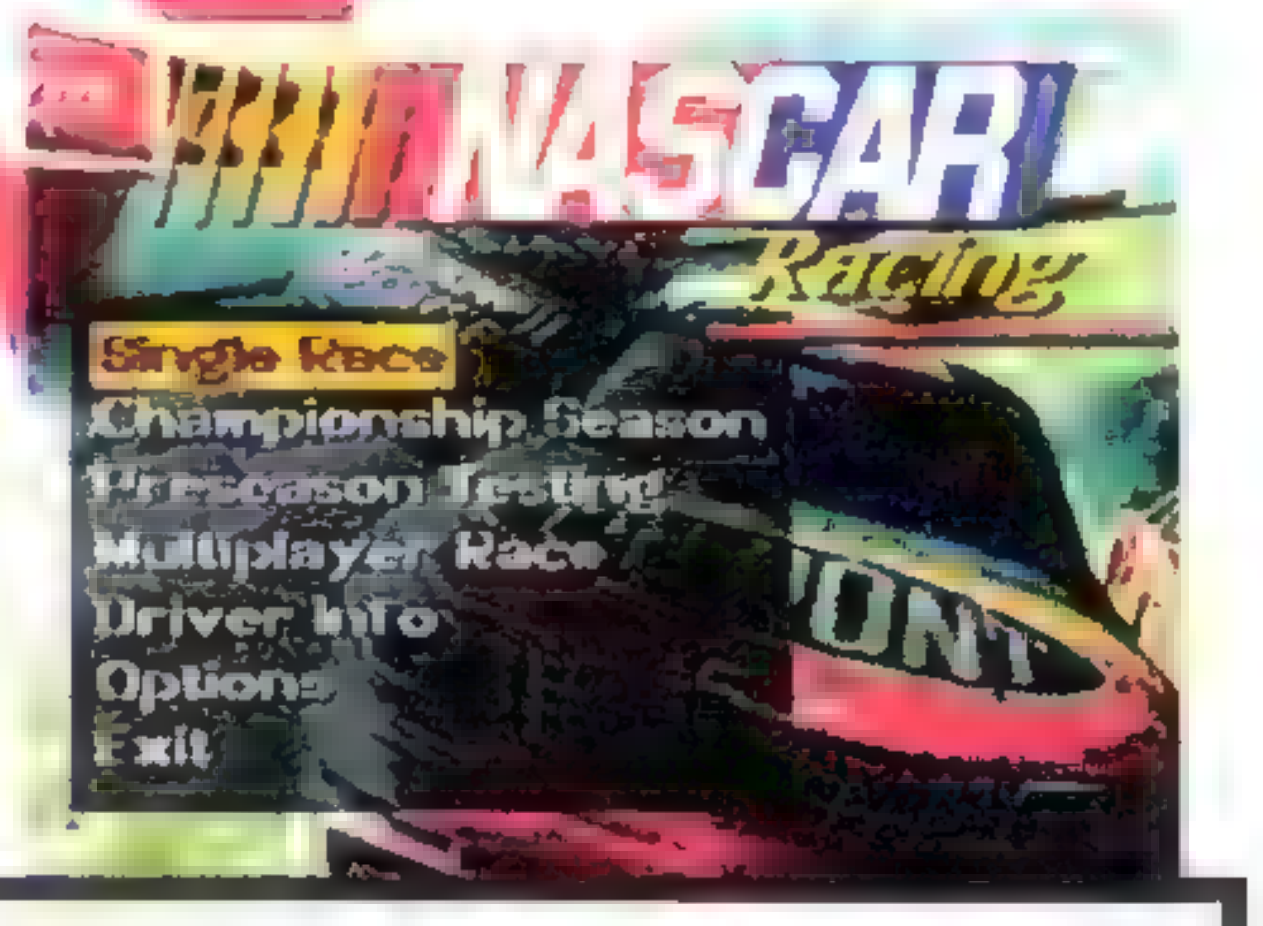

Yes! Yes! Oh, yes! More! YES!


A satisfying experience. You'll get off on it.


Knick-knack, paddywhack, who cares?


Flush it!


Fuel
More
Done
Less
22 Gal

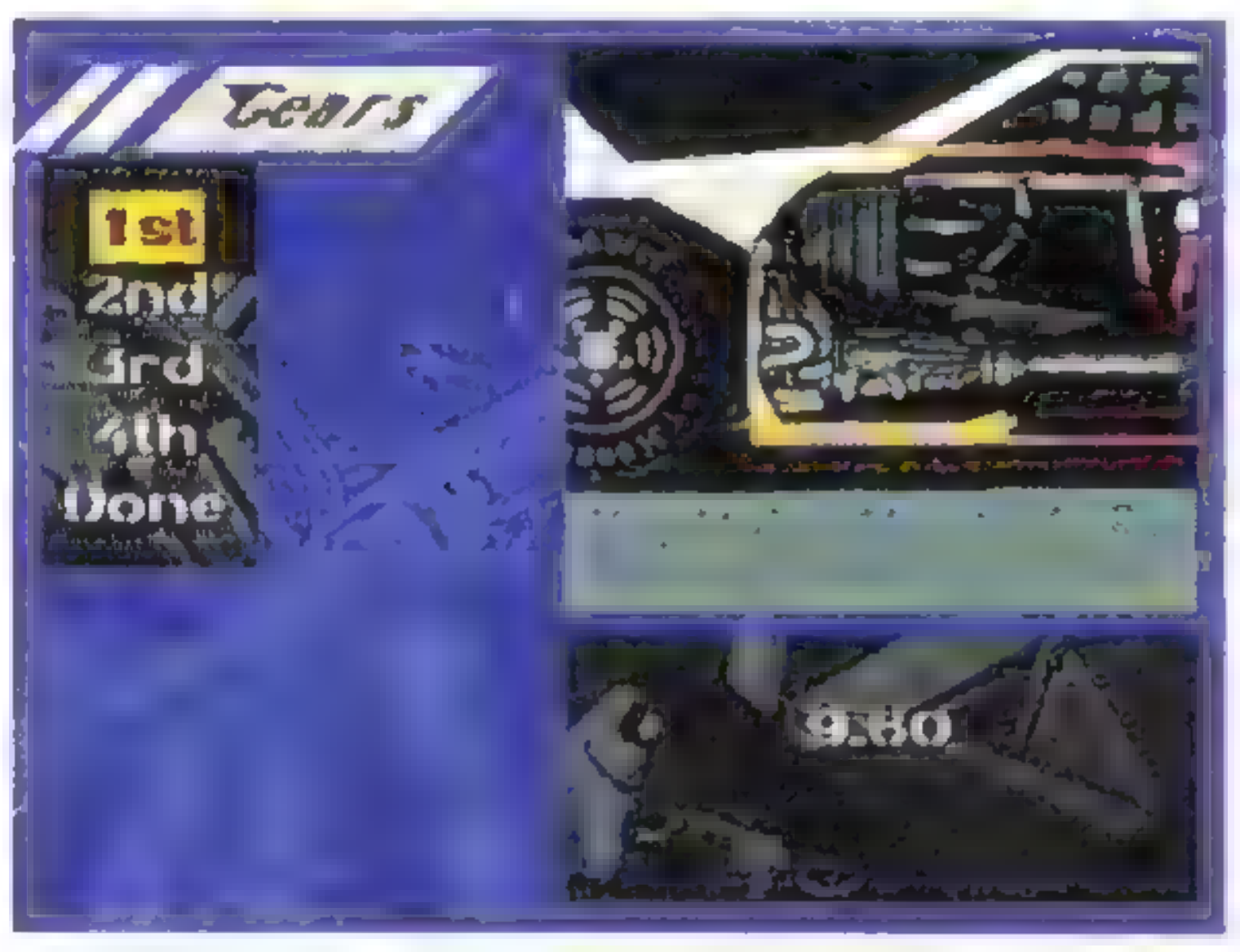

NASCAR Racing
Single Race
Championship Season
Preseason Testing
Multiplayer Race
Driver Info
Options
Exit

NASCAR RACING

system PC CD-Rom/floppy
manufacturer Papyrus/Virgin
graphix A+
control A-
sound A
password/save Yes
buy/rent Buy
overall A+

"Virtua what?" This was precisely the thought that popped into my head the minute I pulled my stock car out of the pits and started racing in Papyrus's new *NASCAR Racing* PC CD-ROM. Of course, I'm referring to Sega's *Virtua Racing*, which is commonly hailed as the king of racing games—but is nothing more than *Pole Position* compared to this magnificent achievement in auto racing excitement.

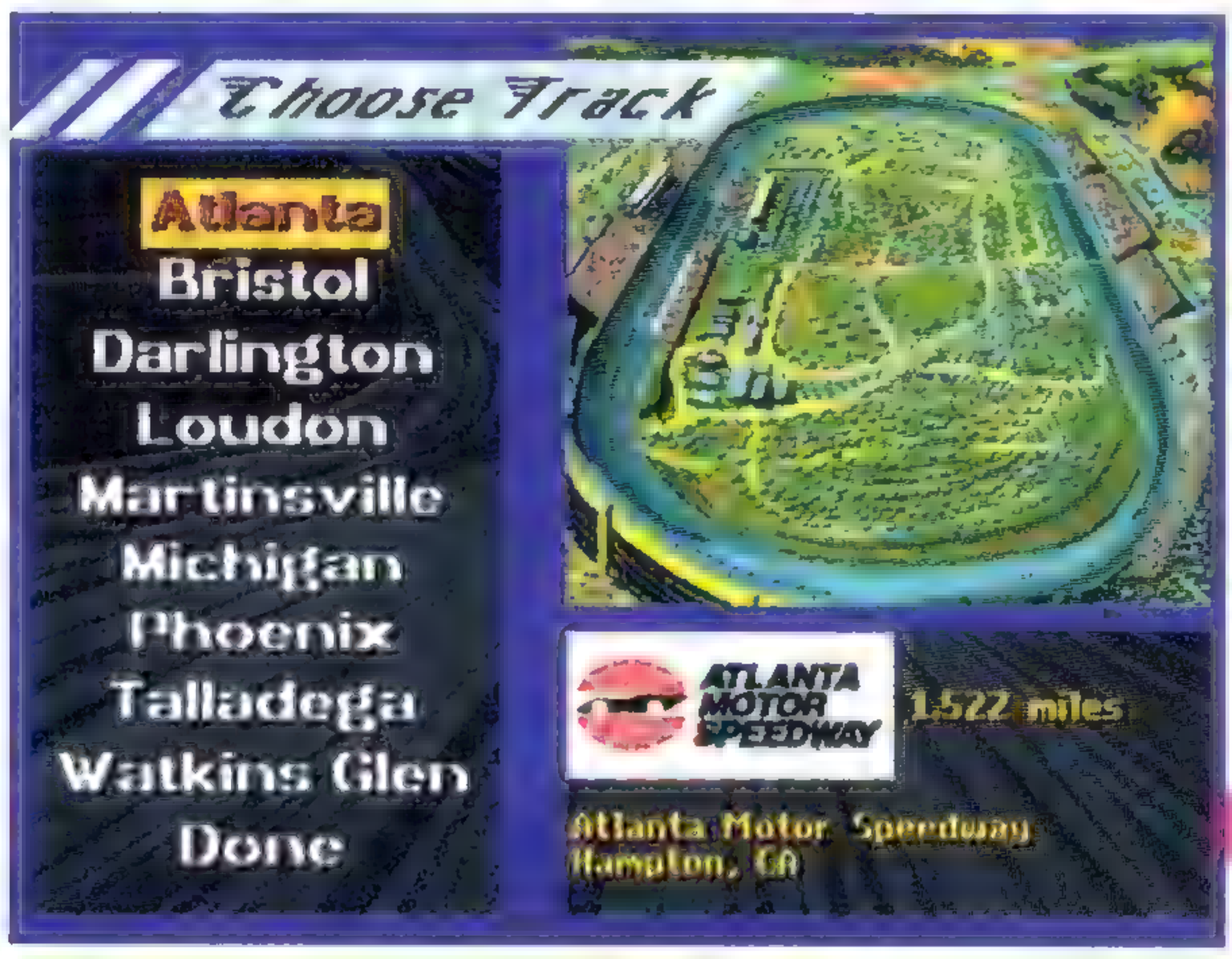
As racing contests go, *NASCAR Racing* is by far the most realistic and exhilarating auto racing sim in gaming history. From the second the intro screen passes and the demo of cars circling the asphalt begins, you'll think you were watching the Daytona 500 on television. The colors are rich and the level of detail astounding, resulting in a visual extravaganza never before seen in a racing game. And best of all—no polygons! Just incredibly realistic looking scenery and vehicles. You'll never again look at those octagonal wheel-like things in *Virtua Racing* the same way.


Gears
1st
2nd
3rd
4th
Done
9.80

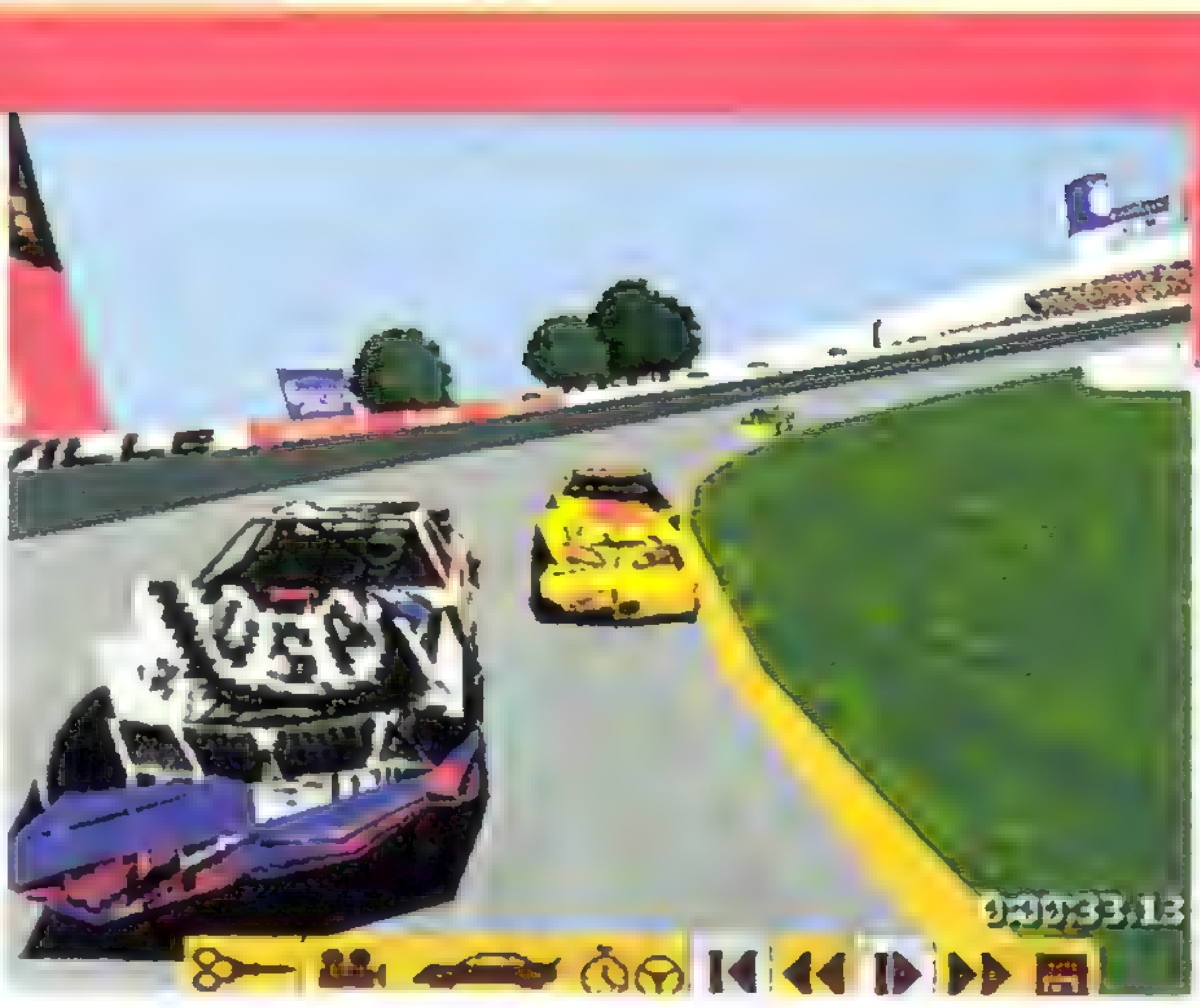
NASCAR Racing has few, if any, down sides, except maybe for the fact that it's almost impossible to just jump in your car and start rippin' around the track at 180 m.p.h. For starters, these cars *feel* like their real-life 3,500-pound counterparts. Keeping that sucker from careening into the outside wall in turn four or holding her steady when she threatens to spin out in the grass can prove to be extremely difficult, particularly at high speeds. But always remember, this is as close to real racing as it gets, and the sluggish feel of the cars only enhances this unique effect. If you're looking to just zip around the track a few times, you're in the wrong place—in *NASCAR Racing*, with that kind of attitude your car will quickly become a smoldering pile of scrap metal.

Detail freaks will appreciate *NASCAR*'s often unnerving focus on real aspects of racing, such as knowing which types of tires to use (Hoosier or Goodyear), how to adjust suspension, gear ratios and other such uncommon knowledge that could drastically alter a car's performance. Fortunately, the default settings are usually enough to get you moving and having fun.

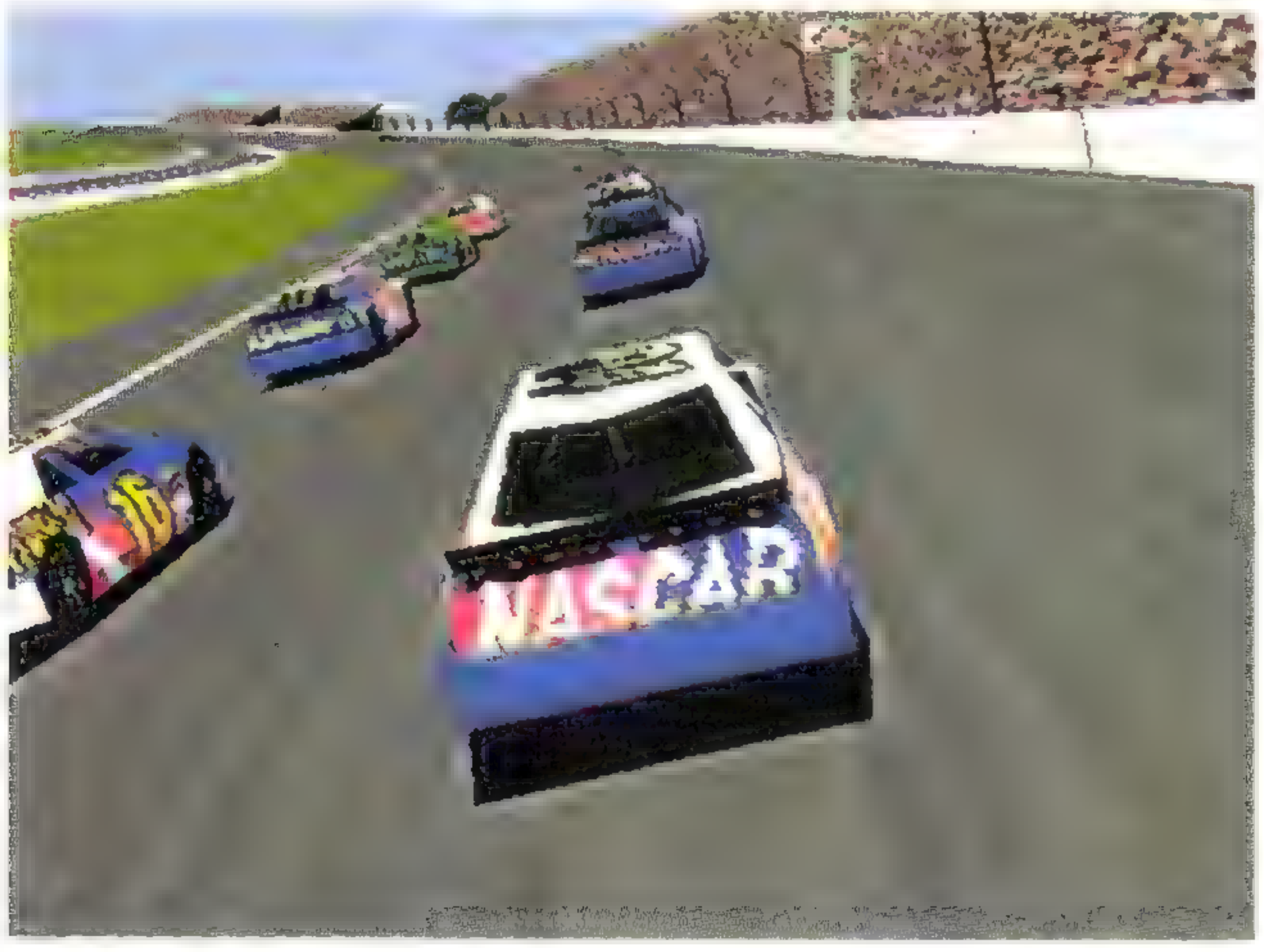
During the race, your car has three camera views: a behind-the-wheel first-person view, a behind-the-car "chase" view, and an even farther away chase. From inside the car, you need to keep in close contact with your pit crew. Should you smack into a wall and dent a fender, you'll need to tell them to fix it when you pull in. The same


Choose Track
Atlanta
Bristol
Darlington
Loudon
Martinsville
Michigan
Phoenix
Talladega
Watkins Glen
Done
Atlanta Motor Speedway
1.522 miles
Atlanta Motor Speedway
Hampton, GA

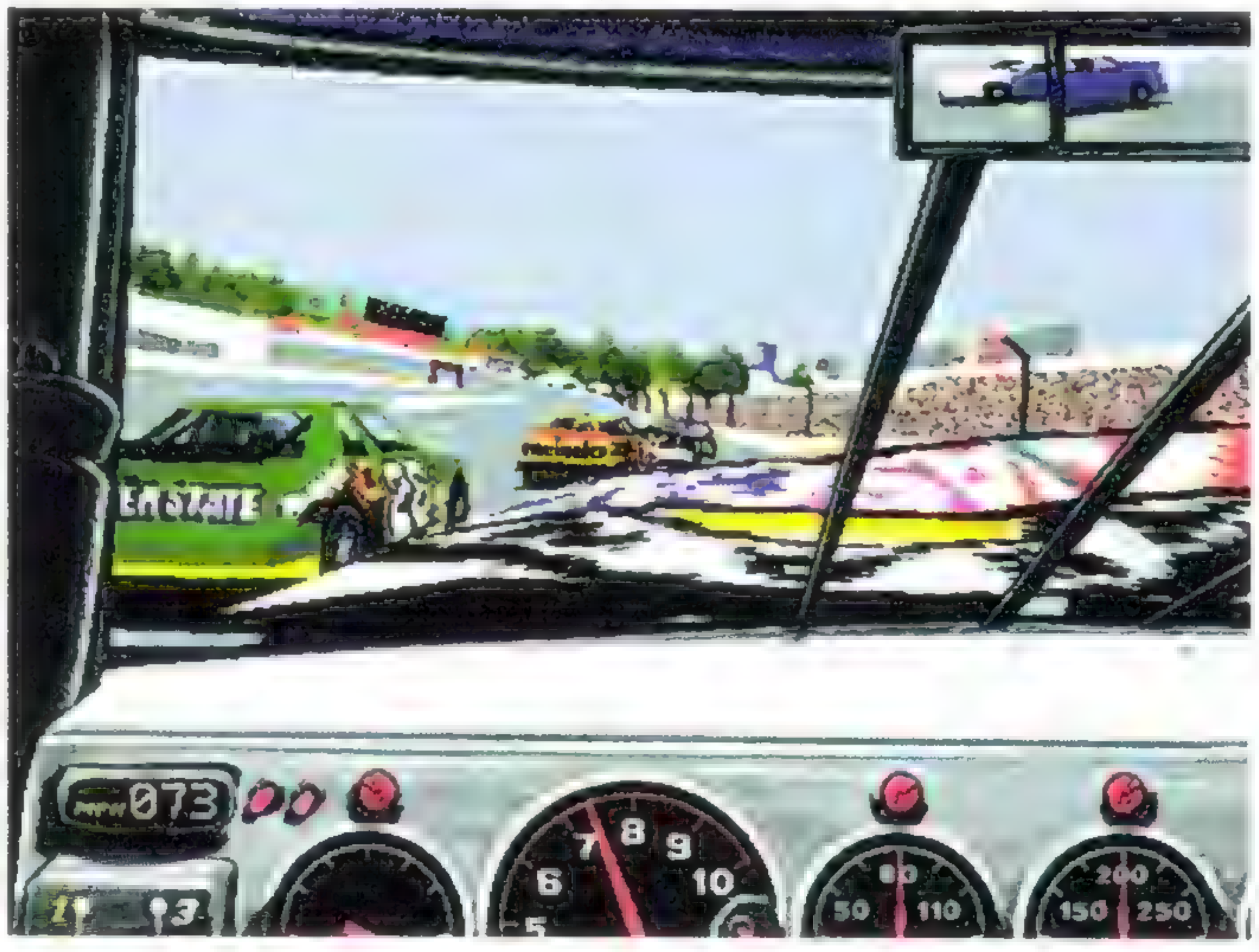
goes for low fuel, tire pressure, water temperature and the like. You can change gears manually or use the automatic mode, and the same applies for braking.



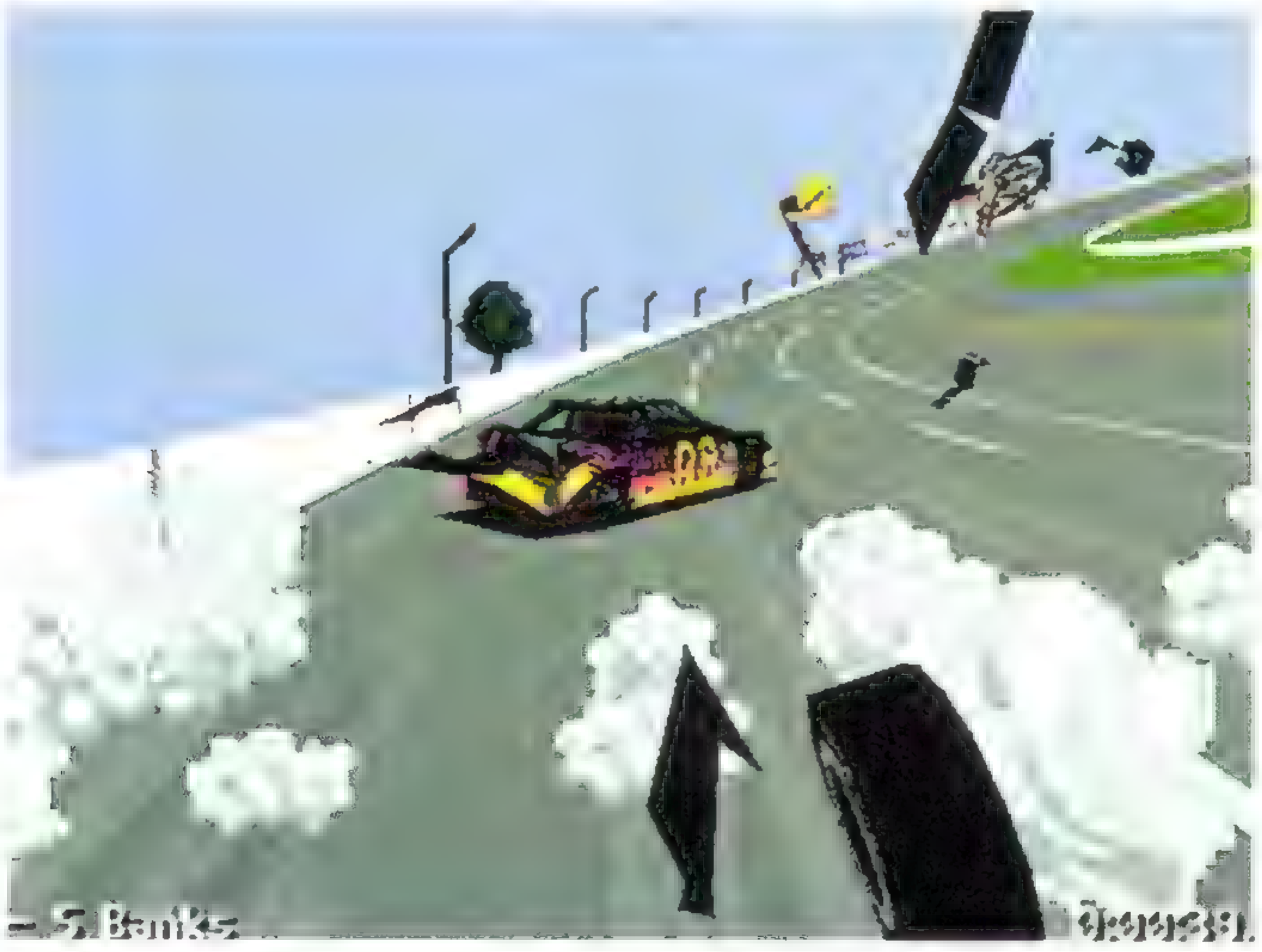
Options are another one of *NASCAR*'s strong points. You can change everything from the strength of the opposing cars to the length of the race itself and even which graphic parts of the game to accentuate depending on the power of your system (grass and asphalt, for example, take more power to run in high detail—sometimes it's best to shut them off). Pick the type of chassis you want (Chevy, Ford or Pontiac?), the tires, the track (all real NASCAR tracks like Talladega and Watkins Glen, each with characteristics that match the real-life track), go into the garage and give the car a new paint job—just about every aspect of *NASCAR Racing* is customizable.



Now let's talk crashes. Wipe-outs. 15-car pileups. In *NASCAR Racing*, you just don't smack into other cars or scrape the wall—you hit things with so much force you'll wish your desk chair had a seat belt. When accidents occur (and believe me, they *do* occur), especially real nasty ones, shards of metal and car armor go flying in all directions, smoke fills the track and busted tires spin off into oncoming traffic. And best of all, you can re-watch the auto-Armageddon using the instant replay feature and actually view the destruction from something like 15 different views, and from any car on the track! The possibilities are endless, each one more thrilling to watch than the last.



For those blessed with a 16-bit sound card and a decent set of speakers, the sounds that emanate from *NASCAR Racing* only add to the game's frighteningly realistic edge. From behind the wheel, you can hear the faint sounds of distant engines as you see small blips in your rear view mirror—and listen as it builds to a deafening roar as the pack passes you in a straightaway. Slam head-on into an oncoming car (this, of course, is much easier to accomplish when you actually drive in the *opposite* direction. Heh, heh.) and the crunch of metal and screech of skidding tires will surely shake a few walls in the room.



Unfortunately, to fully appreciate the brilliance of *NASCAR Racing* (especially in CD-ROM only SVGA mode), you'll need a pretty fast computer with bucketloads of memory (and even then you'll probably have to make a boot disk, which is discussed in the manual). Strange as it may sound, games like *NASCAR Racing* are almost a good enough reason to upgrade your system, no matter what the cost.

NASCAR Racing is a revolutionary breakthrough in video/computer game auto racing, one that will undoubtedly redefine the genre's standard for years to come. **—JK**

THE SECRETS TO WINNING THE NASCAR WAY

1) Always stay in close contact with your pit crew. They're a racer's lifeblood and need to be kept apprised of your car's condition. Use your two way radio to relay pertinent information, like how much fuel you have left or your tire temperature.

2) Learn to use the technique of "drafting" (getting in close behind another car and letting that car break the wind flow into your car). But be careful—constant drafting *will* help you conserve fuel, but chances are good that your water temperature will rise because the radiator isn't getting its necessary airflow.

3) Don't rev the engine too much once you hit the 9,000 r.p.m. mark—engine failure is always a possibility.

4) You have your choice of three different viewpoints during the race, but our advice is to stick with the behind-the-wheel view. Handling is much easier, and this is the only view in which you can communicate with your pit crew. Of course, feel free to shift occasionally to a chase view in order to assess the location of the other drivers.

5) Learn to pause the action before relaying info to your pit crew. There's nothing more dangerous than fishing for the F9 key while doing 190+ m.p.h. near the outside wall.

6) From the Options screen, keep your graphics options on "auto." This way, the computer will make the necessary adjustments (like when to show grass and asphalt texture, wall texture, the presence of smoke, etc.) during the race. A useful option for slower computers.

7) Don't be afraid to hit the brakes when you feel like you're about to lose control. But don't apply brakes too quickly, or you're sure to spin out and wind up in a heap of trouble.

8) Should you sustain exterior body damage, head into the pits and get it fixed. Accordioned hoods and dented fenders certainly look cool, but they'll drastically affect your car's performance and your control will go straight to hell.

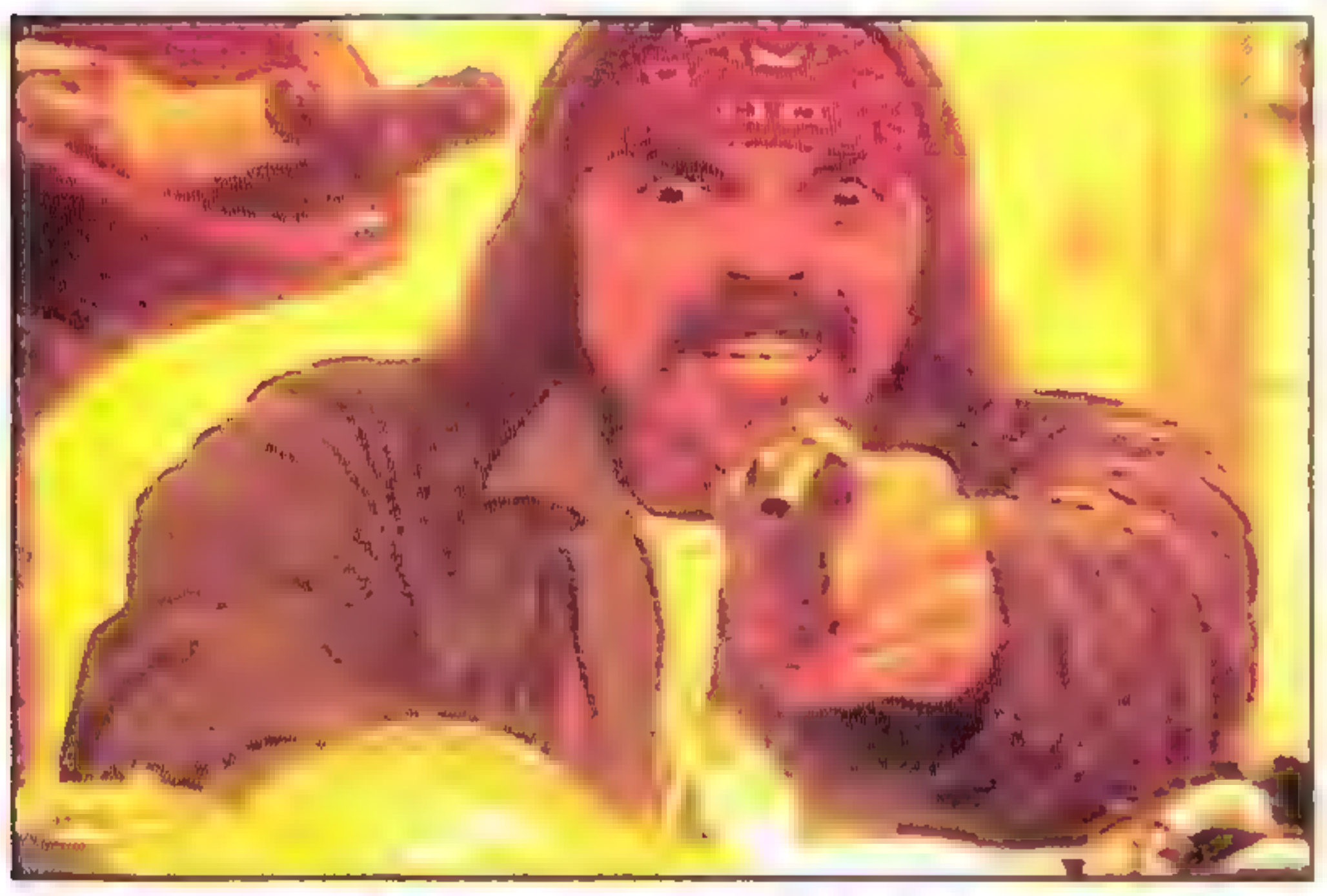
9) When you're just beginning, try to stay low in the turns—resist the temptation to let gravity pull you to the outside because you'll probably end up scraping the wall. Besides, the inside track is always shorter in length, and you'll need all the help you can get.

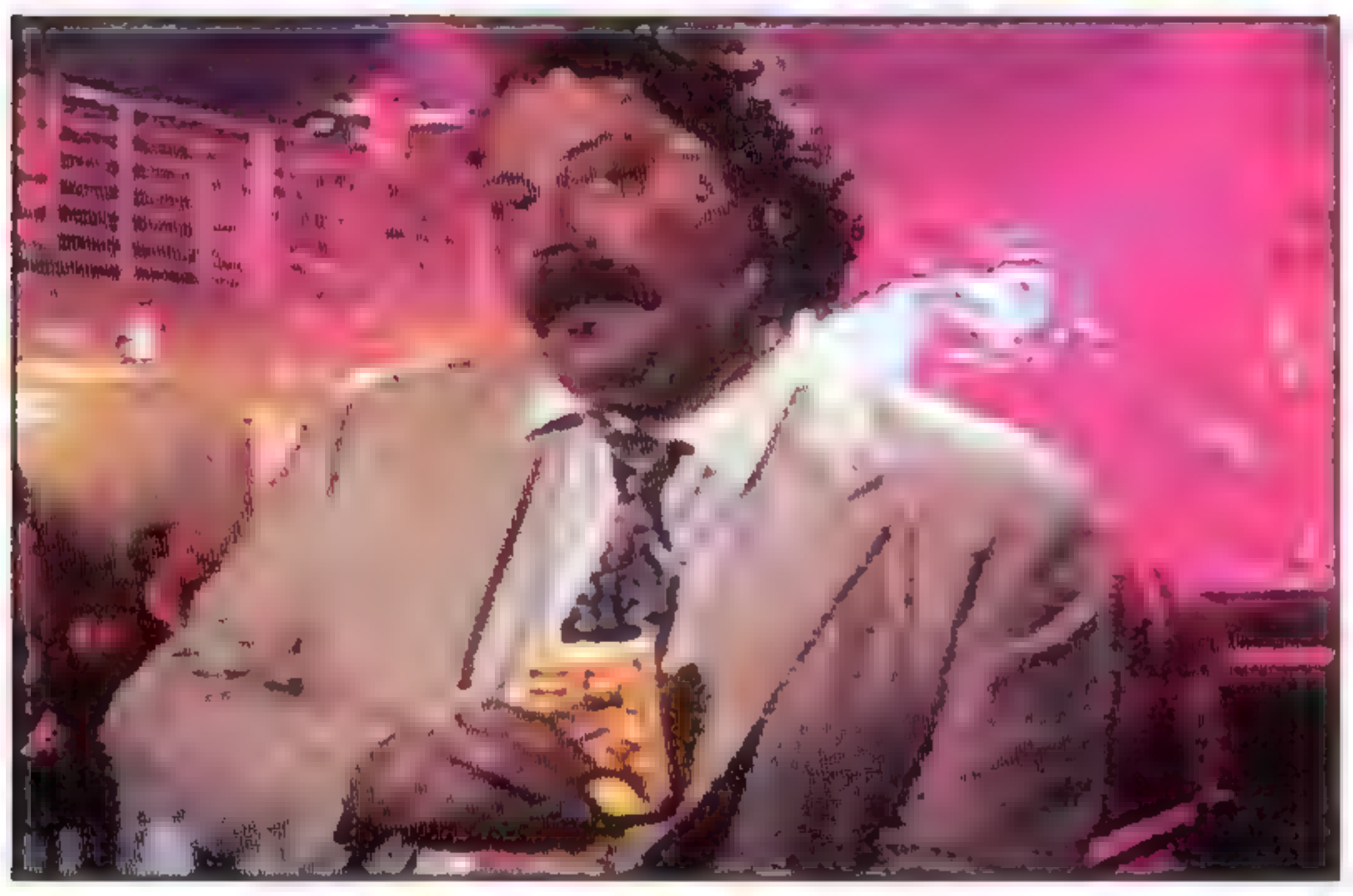
10) Beginners should spend most of their time on the Talladega track—it's the easiest to handle and a good way to learn the finer points of racing the NASCAR circuit. And don't be ashamed of practicing too much—it'll be quite some time before you're ready to duke it out with such racing legends as Rusty Wallace, Sterling Marlin and Bill Elliot.

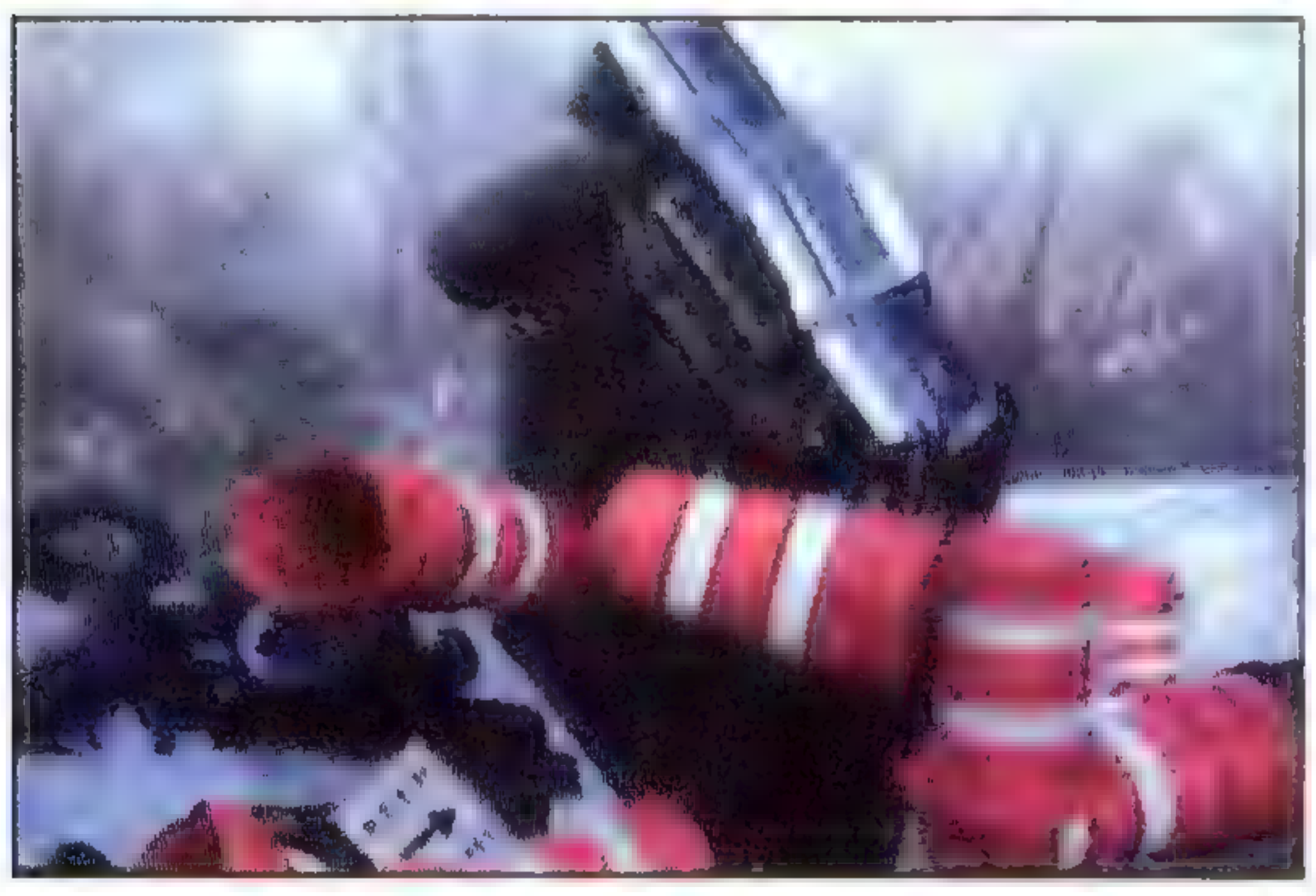
CRIMEPATROL

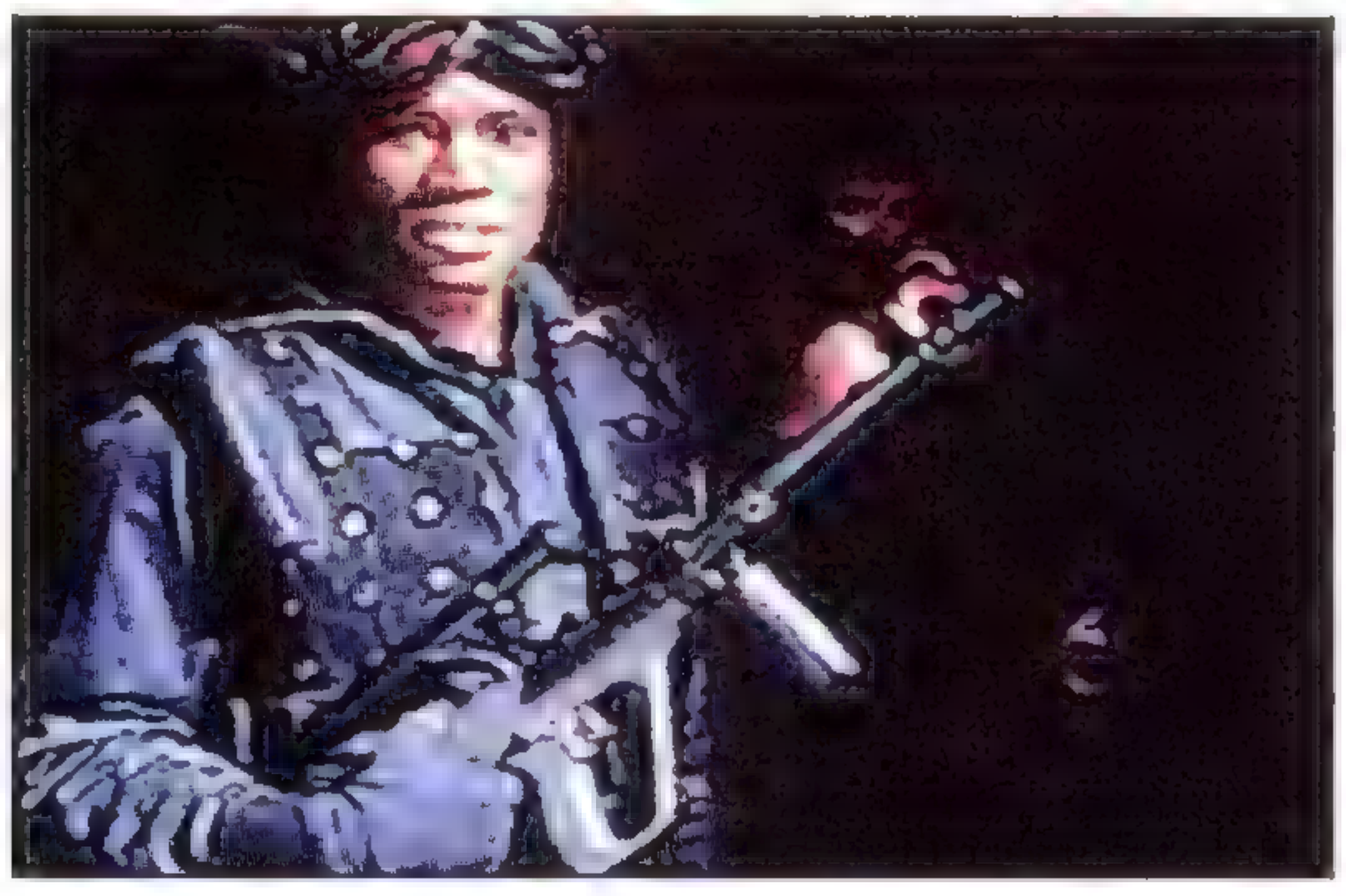
system **3DO**
manufacturer **American Laser Games**
graphix **B+**
control **B**
sound **C+**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **B**

After a few truly unsuccessful attempts at bringing some of their laser disc-based arcade games to the home (like *Mad Dog McCree* and *Who Shot Johnny Rock?* for the Sega CD), ALG finally does itself justice with its home translation of *Crime Patrol*.









Like the aforementioned, *Crime Patrol* is a full motion video game with real actors (although bad ones—my mom would make a better cop than the chick who plays your partner!) and real settings, all shot on film instead of using traditional computer-generated graphics. Using ALG's "Game Gun" (purchased separately, although you can use the 3DO control pad), which works just like Konami's "Justifier" for *Lethal Enforcers*, you watch the on-screen action unfold and, at the appropriate time, aim and try to take out the bad guys before they get you. It's similar in concept to *Lethal Enforcers*, except that *Crime Patrol* is made up of all FMV (which, although it's more "realistic," actually makes the game more repetitive and less of a full-scale gun fight than *Lethal*).

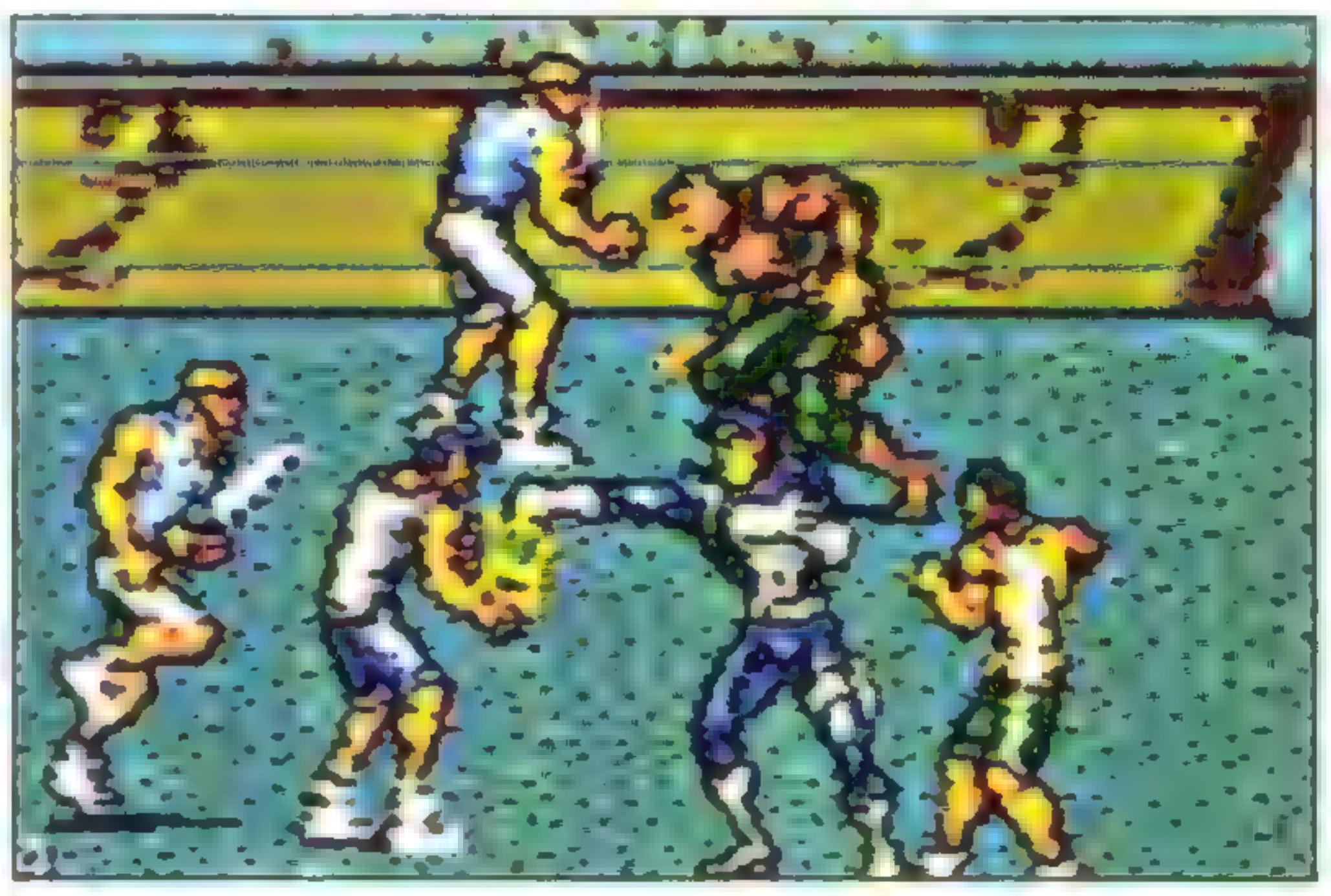
Unlike the Sega CD version of *Mad Dog* and *Johnny Rock*, *Crime Patrol* offers high-quality video and relatively fast access time (gotta love that 3DO system!). The gun controls are fairly precise, although sometimes you clearly nail the enemy first, only the computer doesn't quite see it that way—and this can be incredibly frustrating. And the fact that there's no save or password feature is a damn outrage. After you use up your continues, you're back to the first level, replaying everything you've already seen (which, unlike in a traditional video game, is like seeing the same bust on *Cops* ten times in a row—there's no element of surprise, and it gets boring awful fast).

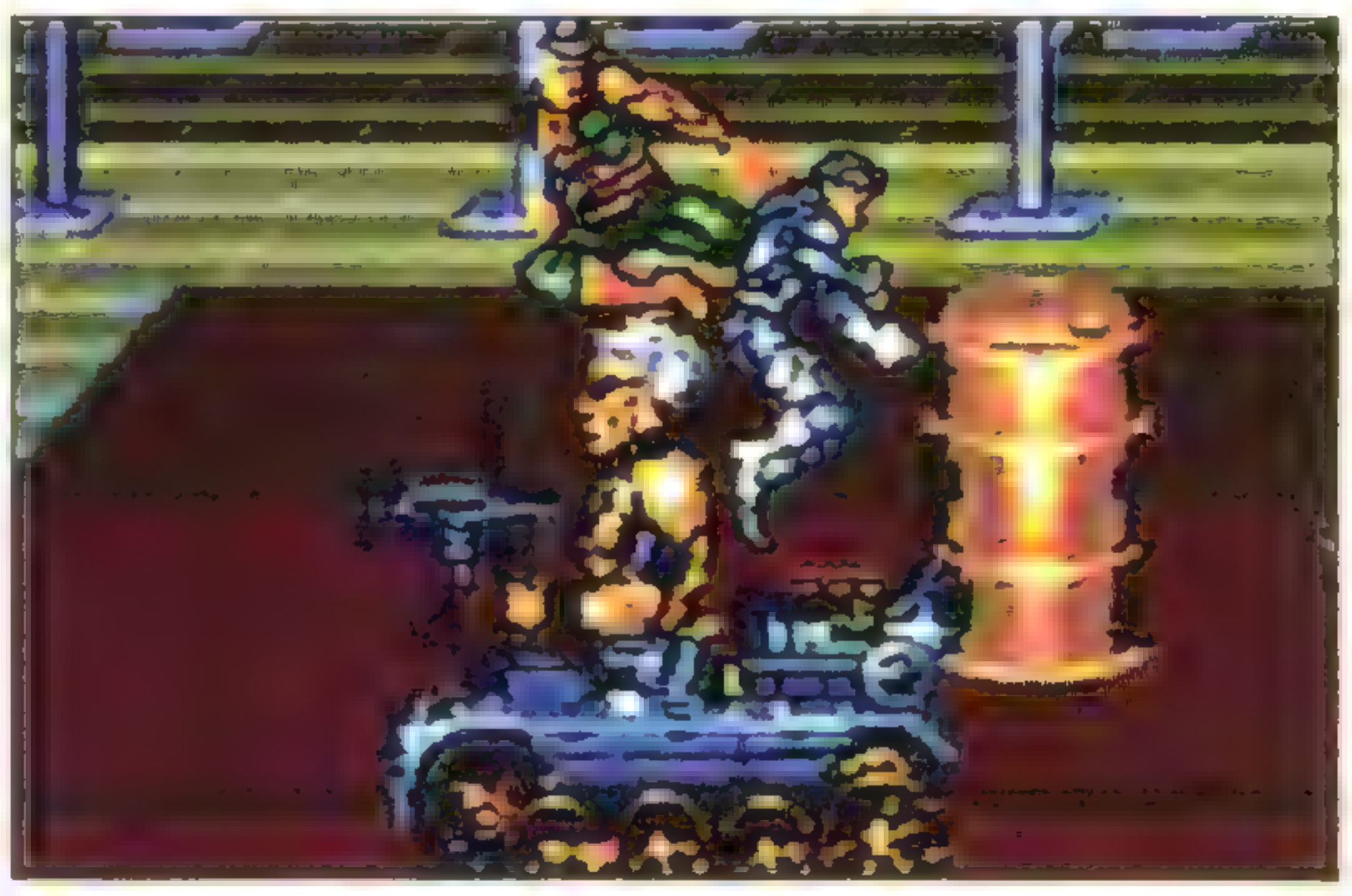
Overall, *Crime Patrol* is a quality translation of the arcade original, and only further enhances the value of the 3DO.**—JK**

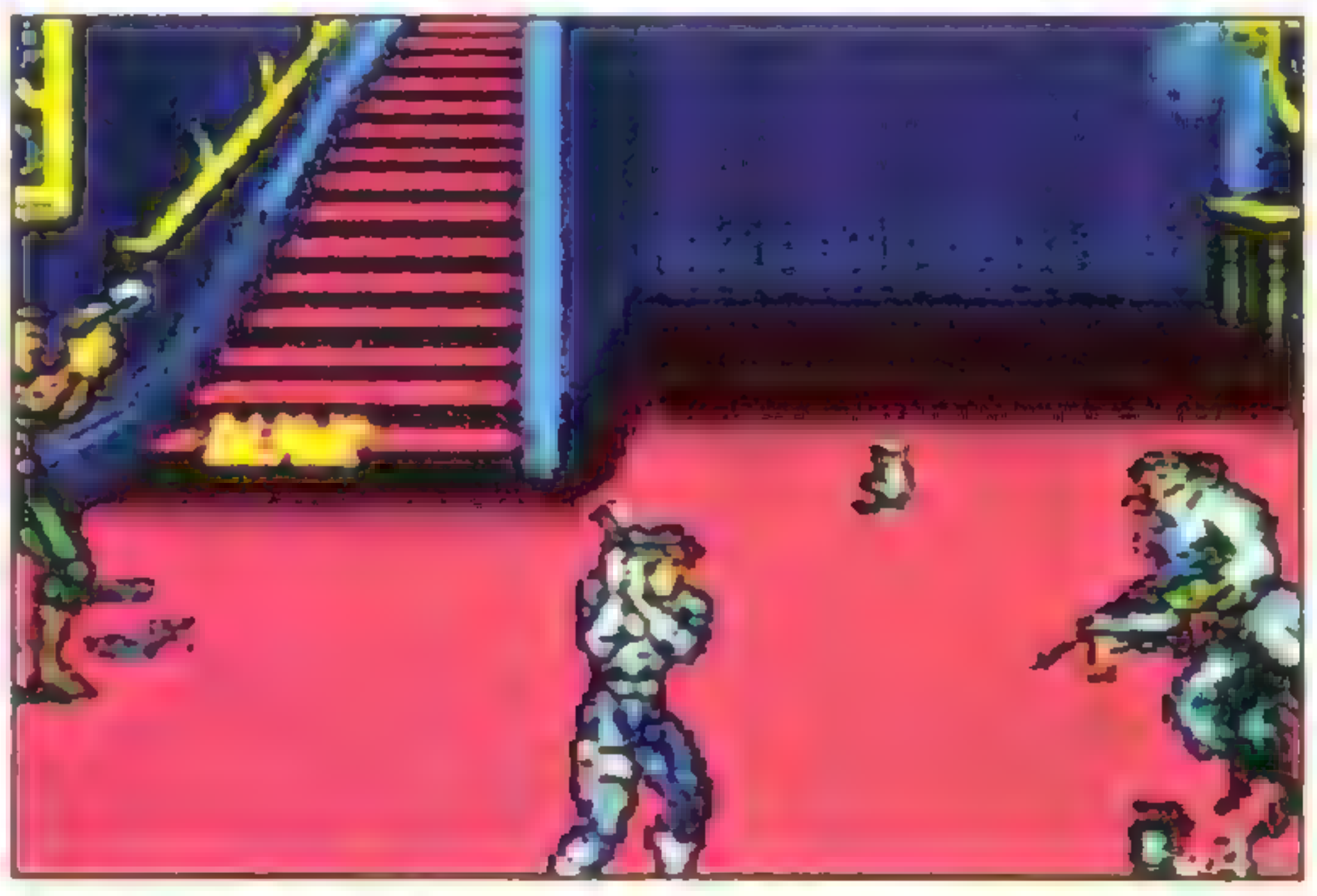
THEPUNISHER

system **Genesis**
manufacturer **Capcom**
graphix **C+**
control **C-**
sound **C-**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **D**

Frank Castle and most video games work on the same principle: If it moves, shoot it. A game based on *The Punisher*, then, was probably inevitable. Never mind Castle's vendetta against New York City criminals; this Capcom clunker is punishment enough.







SEGA
MARVEL COMICS
CAPCOM
THE PUNISHER
GENESIS
SEGA
TEEN
T
AGES 13+

Maximum Carn...er, *The Punisher* is a boring-as-hell side-scroller, the kind of crap Capcom has spent years perfecting and is currently recycling in nearly every game they produce. No need for original thought, boys; just take that gameplay engine from *Final Fight*, slap a skull costume on Mike Haggar, make the game less responsive and ship it out. Control feels thick, scrolling is sluggish, the sprites move choppily and the soundtrack was apparently created on a very weak Casio.

There are a few nice touches in *The Death And Return of Sup*...I mean, *The Punisher*—gamers can play as either Frank Castle or Nick Fury, a little comic book "BLAM!" appears whenever our heroes fire a gun—but those good moments are few and far between.

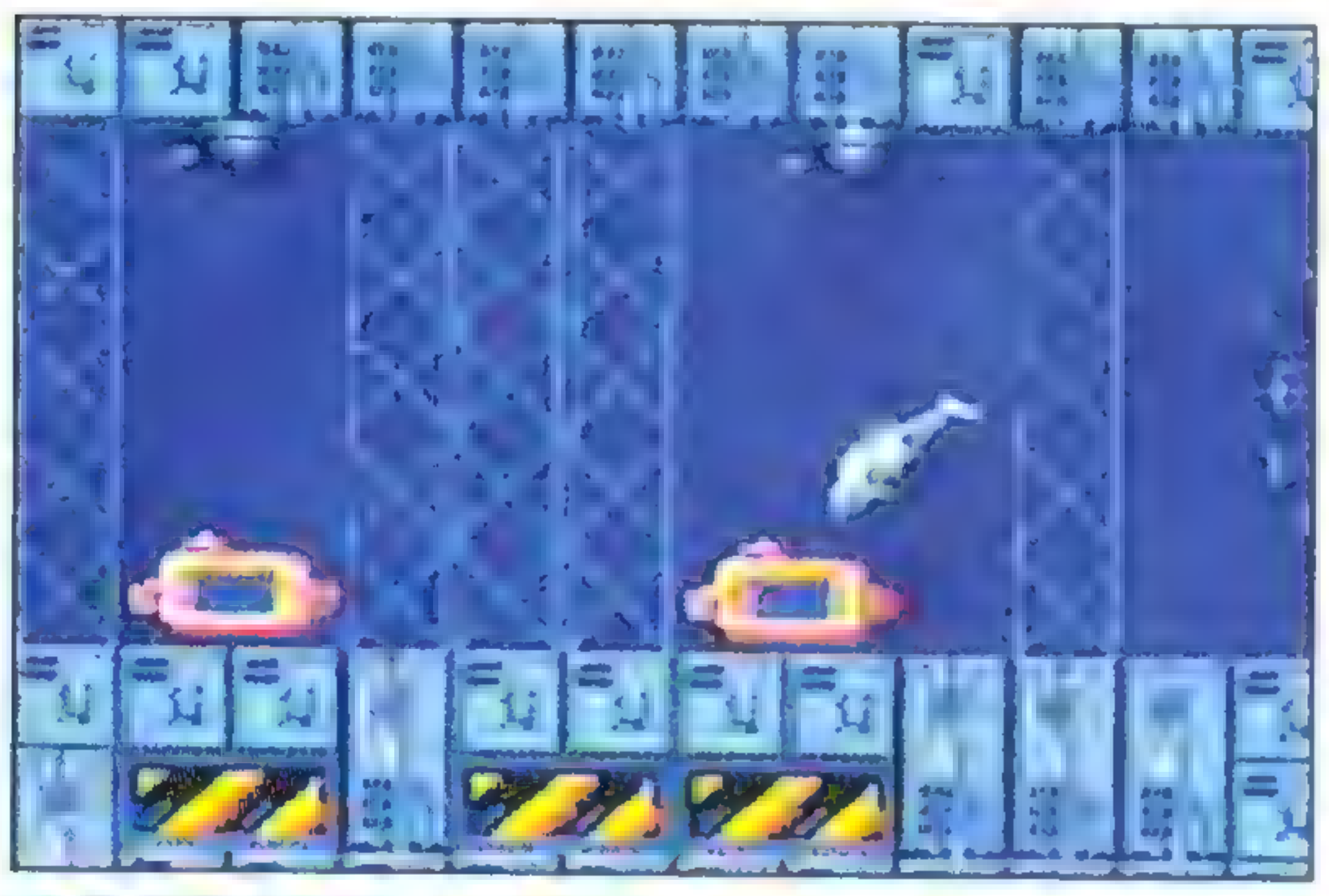
The fact that this was an arcade game in its original incarnation is all the more embarassing—Capcom started with a relatively high-quality, high-visibility product and just downgraded it right to hell. Don't be fooled; this is an old game with a new paint job (and a bad one at that). Chances are, whether you're a Punisher fan or not, you already own this, and in a better incarnation.

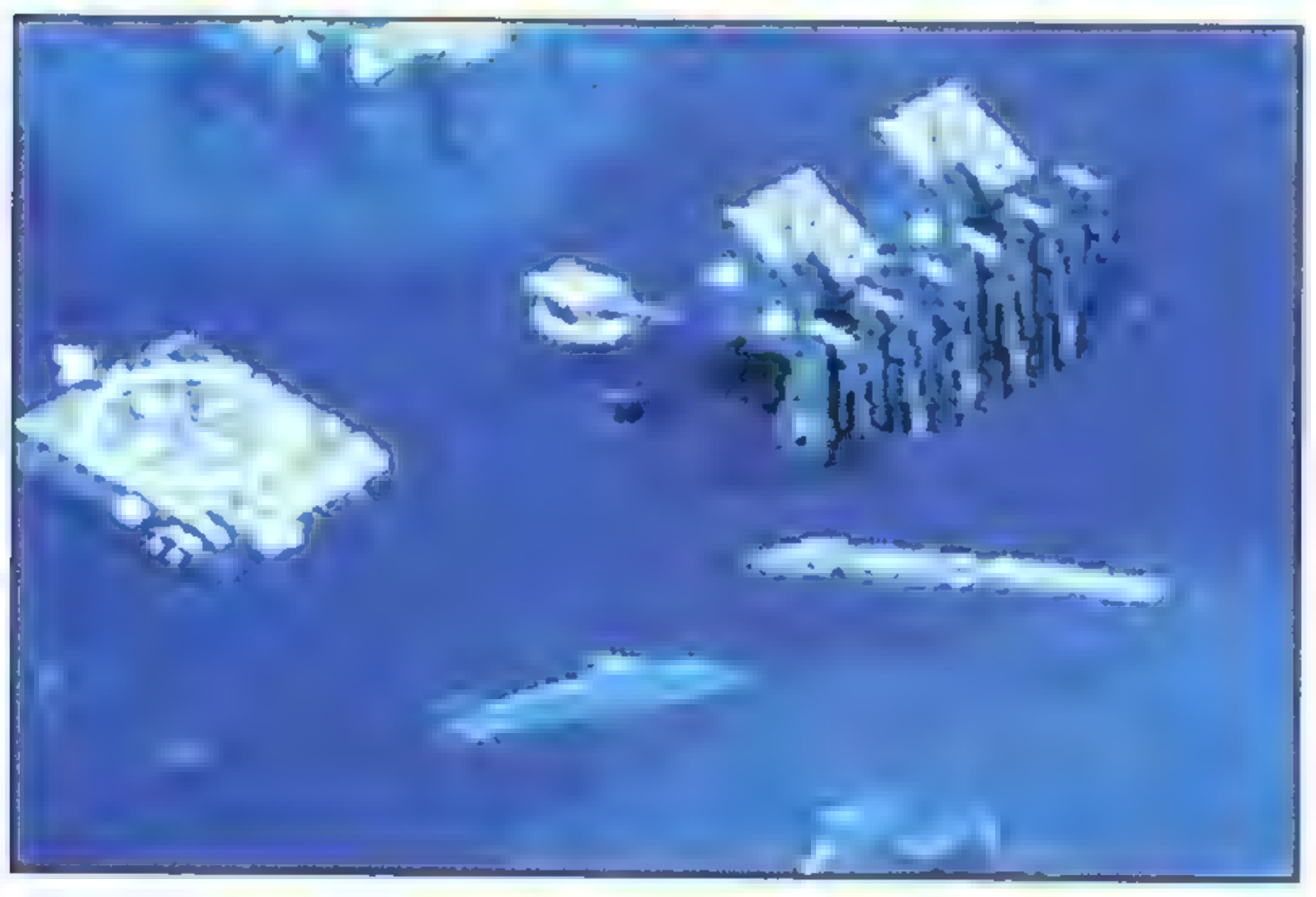
—DAN AMRICH

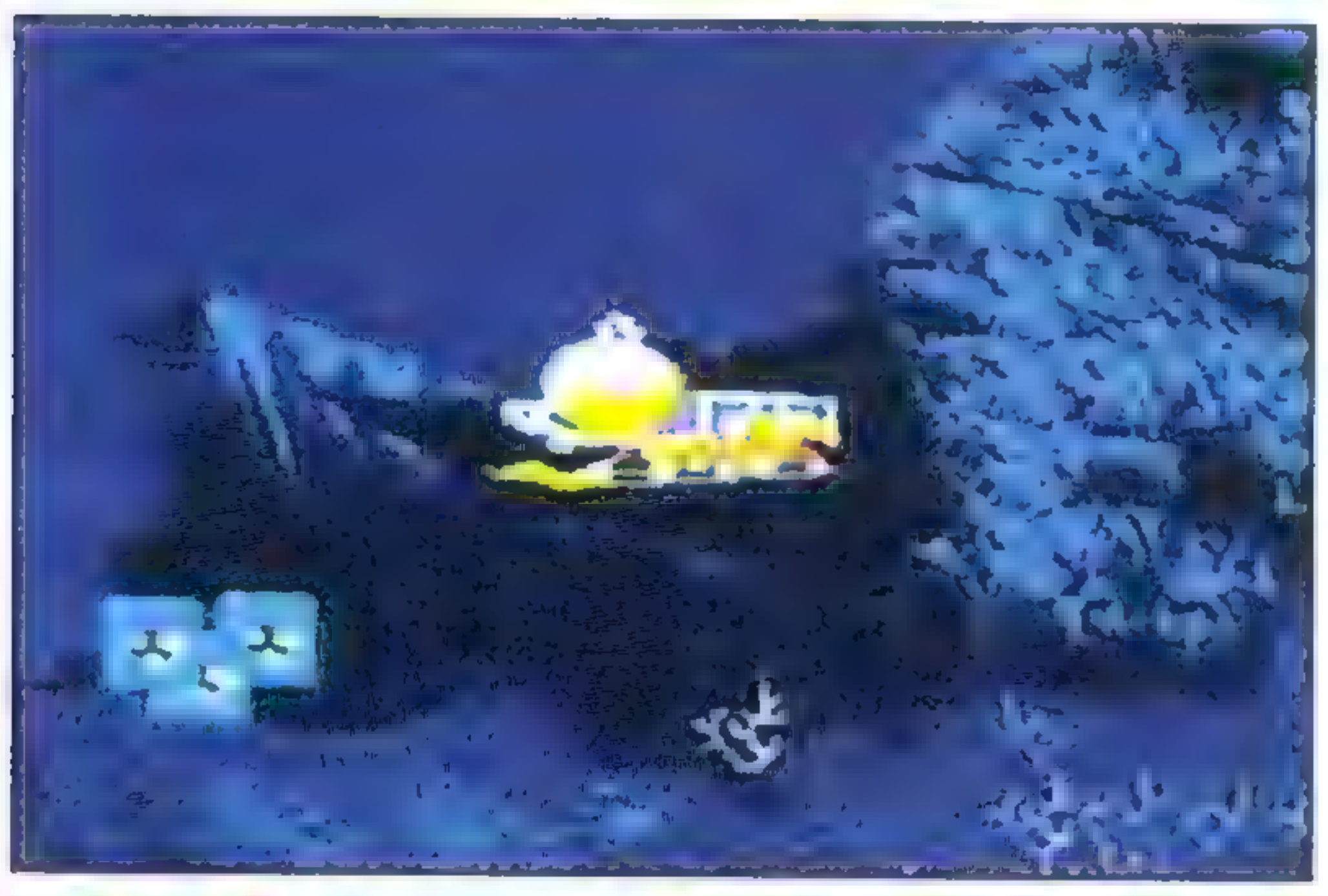
SEAQUESTDSV

system **Genesis**
manufacturer **TH•Q**
graphix **B**
control **B**
sound **C+**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **C+**

There are many kinds of great games. There are games that challenge your mind, games that challenge your reflexes, even games that challenge your morals; games that entertain, frighten and enlighten...and *SeaQuest DSV* ain't any of 'em. Ugh, the pain of playing a great game that shoulda been. You assume command of the greatest submarine vessel ever built, commissioned with keeping the peace under the United Earth Oceans, and yet you spend 89.2% if your time engaged in mindless combat or rescue/repair operations which feel suspiciously alike after two or three missions.







SEGA
GENESIS
seaQuest
DSV
SEGA

All the elements for a killer *SeaQuest*-based game are here, and yet they don't seem to work. Possibly the greatest potential selling point of a game which puts one in command of a great vessel—that of diplomacy versus combat, the ability to make crucial decisions and stick by them—is completely wasted here.

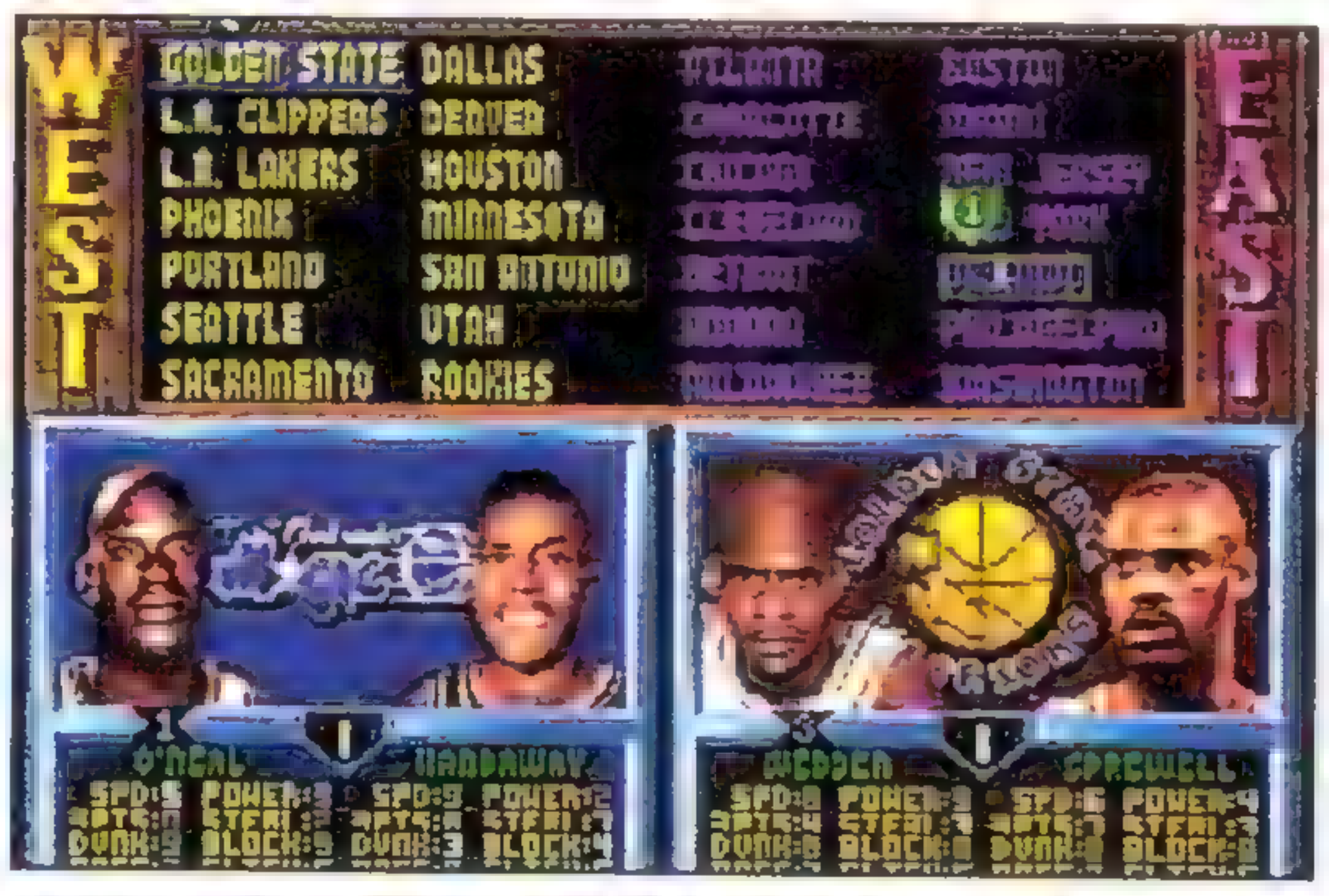
The three-quarter perspective—which has been inexplicably lame ever since *Zaxxon*—is here too, and it still sucks. The concept of the headset-controlled "hyper-reality probe" is likewise thrown down the toilet—it's just another side-scrolling sprite, not the point-of-view mini-mission it *should* have been

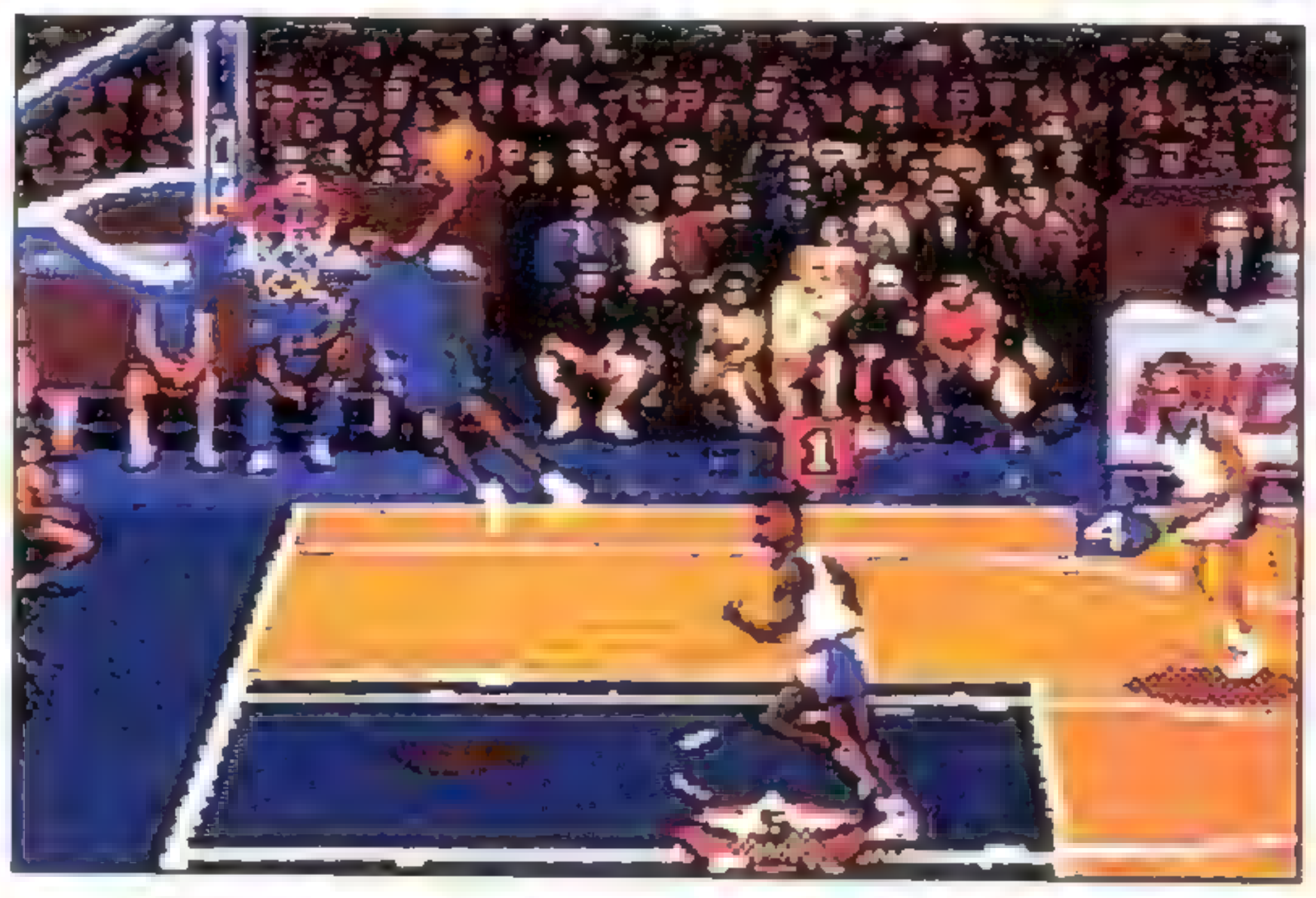
All of this is a shame because the graphics are rather nice and you get to use the expected vehicles and extras, including Darwin The Dolphin—but it's all just too little of too much to do *SeaQuest* justice. **—CHRIS HUDAK**

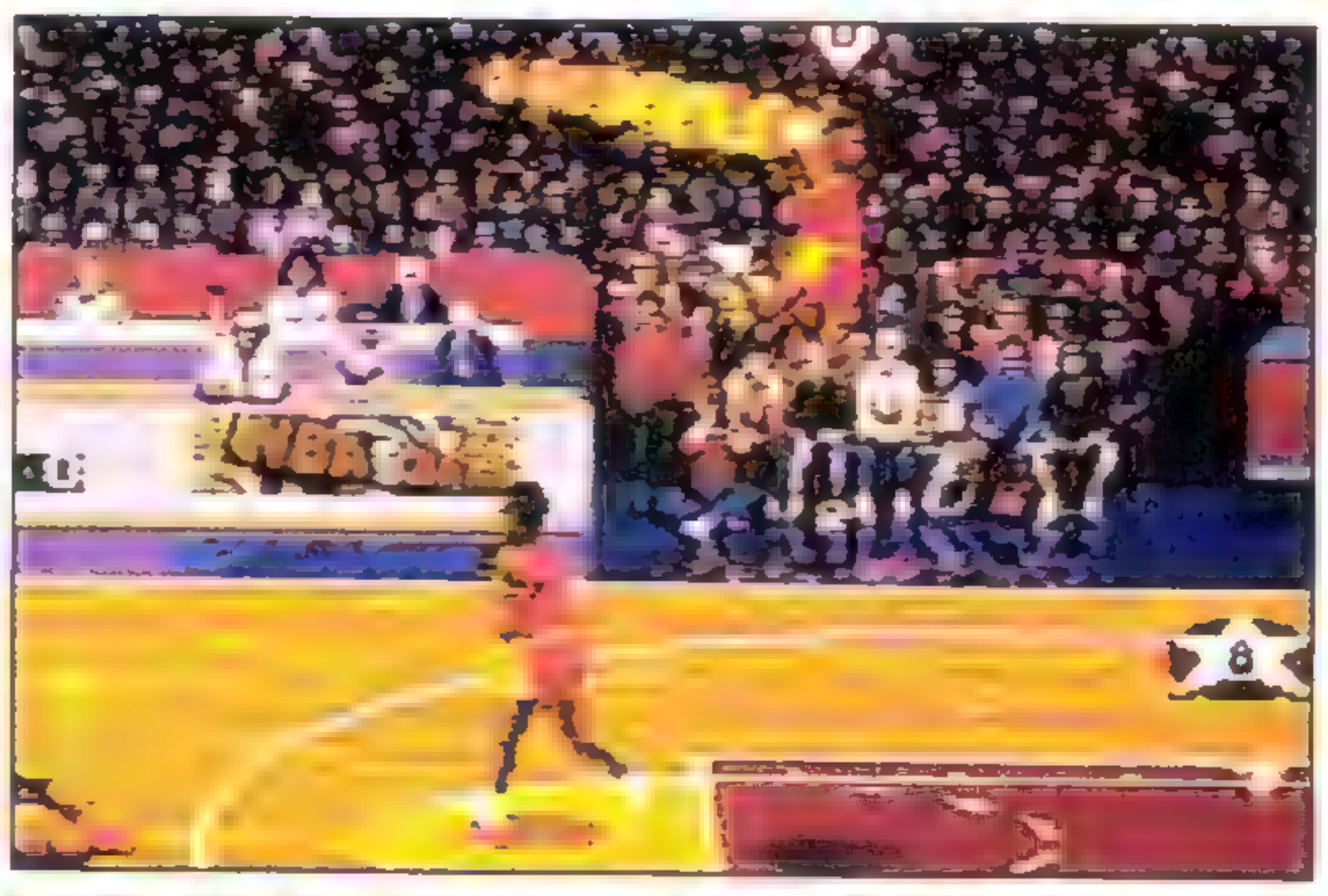
NBAJAM TOURNAMENTEDITION

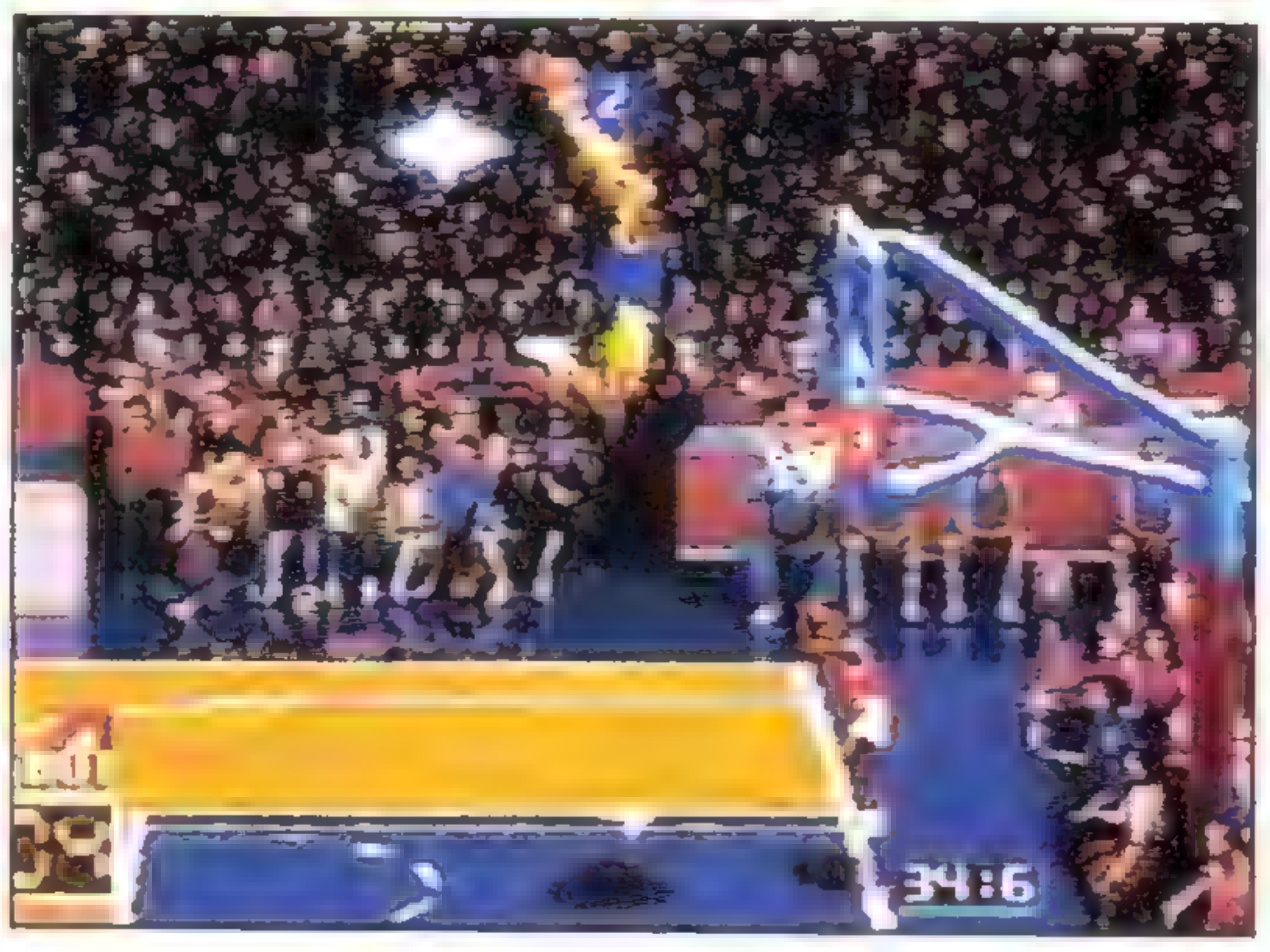
system **SNES**
manufacturer **Acclaim**
graphix **A**
control **A**
sound **A**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Buy**
overall **A**

Ah, March...when a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of...basketball. The college season's winding down and the pro circuit's heating up, so what better time to release the super sequel *NBA Jam Tournament Edition*? It's got everything last year's *Jam* had and much more.









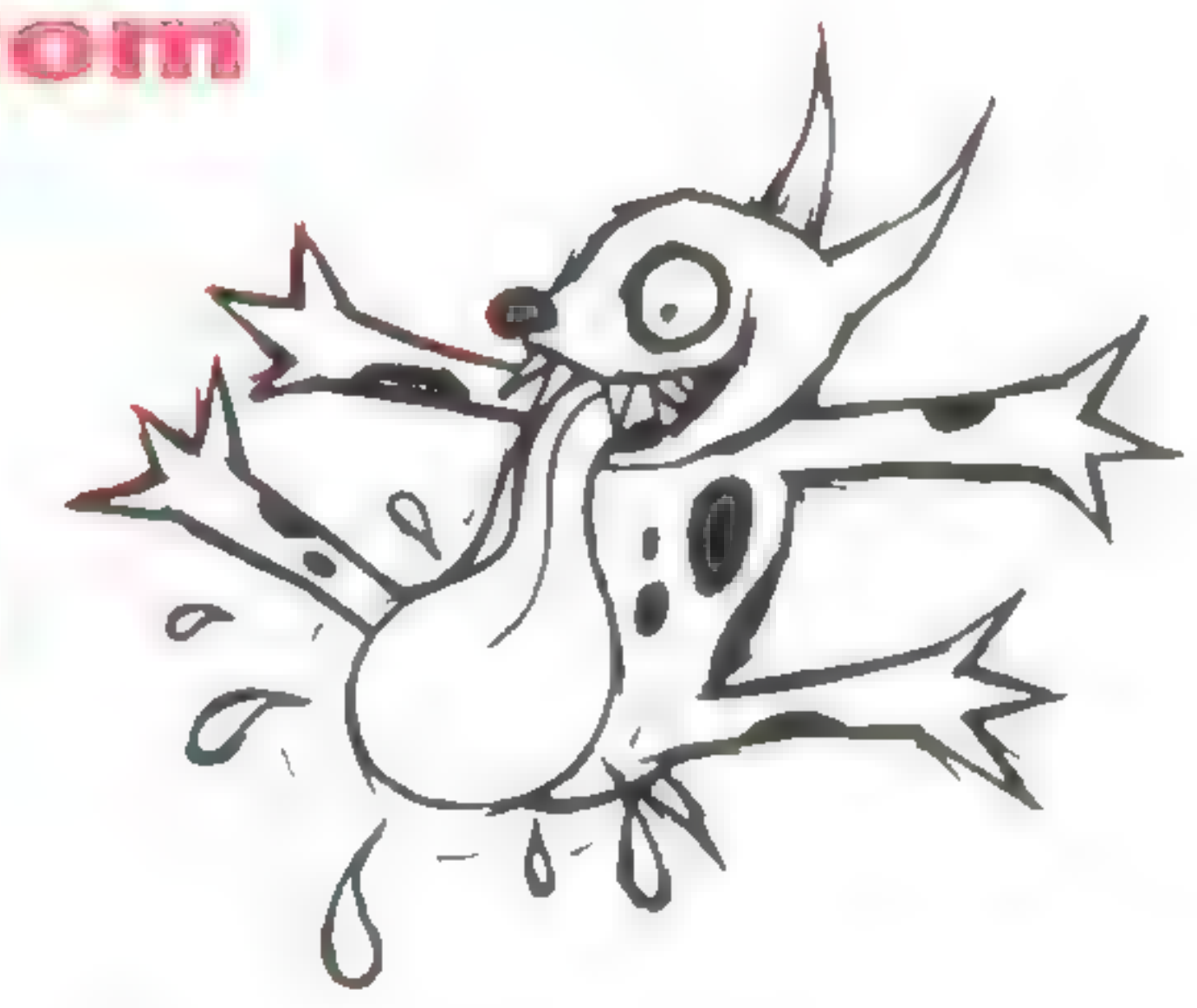
As in the arcade, all the NBA teams are here with expanded star-studded rosters (at least three men per team), plus, exclusive to the home game, a separate team featuring hot NBA rookies like Jason Kidd, Jalen Rose and Grant Hill. Of course, in addition to the latest roster changes (Horace Grant, for instance, is on the Magic), there's a new batch of secret characters to discover as well, Larry Bird among them. After each quarter, for reasons of realism, strategy and/or whim, you're allowed to substitute players from the virtual bench.

Graphics are top-notch; player faces look real, vibrant colors leap off the screen (and the court; the boards are now decorated in the home team's shades) and there's even a little bit of background crowd animation. The stereo soundtrack is great and the announcer's speech samples are vastly improved over the first game's, both in quality and quantity. However, the computer's enhanced AI comes off less as skill and more as cheese—go for a simple jumping two- or three-pointer anywhere near a defender and you *will* get pushed.

Acclaim's added a few options for the home release that don't appear in the arcade version; for instance, during a special mode, randomly-appearing icons on the court give players temporary powerups, like turbo, 3-point accuracy and super dunking (and not just from half court this time, either; prepare to pull off slams from the *opposite* basket). Random, exciting elements like these keep the action lively and make *NBA Jam Tournament Edition* worth a few thousand replays. **—ALVIN GIAMBAROWICZ**

MEGA MAN X2

system **Snes**
manufacturer **Capcom**
graphix **B+**
control **B**
sound **B-**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **B**

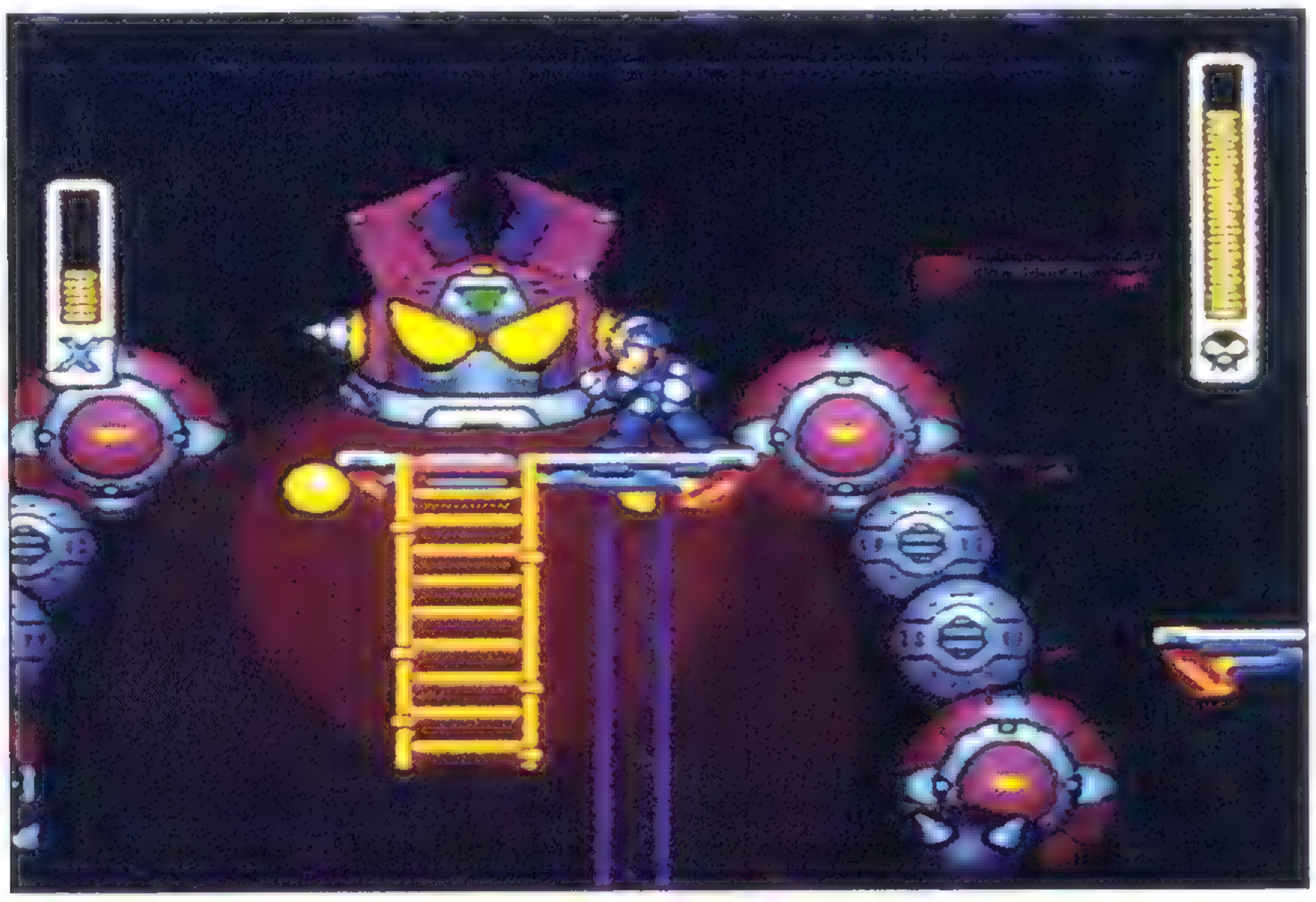


Mega Man X, the predecessor to this year's Mega Man X 2, was oodles of running, jumping and shooting fun. But *X* also had the near-fatal flaw of being too damn easy: even an average player could whip through the game in a day or so. Now, with *Mega Man X 2*, Capcom has not only created a game that's more difficult than *X*, but one that's also more fun to play.

X 2 surpasses its predecessor in several areas, most notably the control department. Mega Man moved like he had a broomstick up his butt in *X*, but he's smooth as buttah here. The background graphics in *X* were good, but the backgrounds in *X 2* are oozing with crisp, colorful detail. Best of all, the notorious SNES slowdown that appeared frequently in *X* is kept to a minimum in *X 2*.

X 2's gameplay is balls-to-the-wall platform action: your mission is to hunt down eight renegade robots with goofy names and even goofier looks. (Morph Moth, Wheel Gator and Wire Sponge are my personal faves). After you defeat each robot, you gain its weapon and can use it against other bosses and enemies. Most of the challenge in *Mega Man X 2* is figuring out which weapon works best against each robot boss.

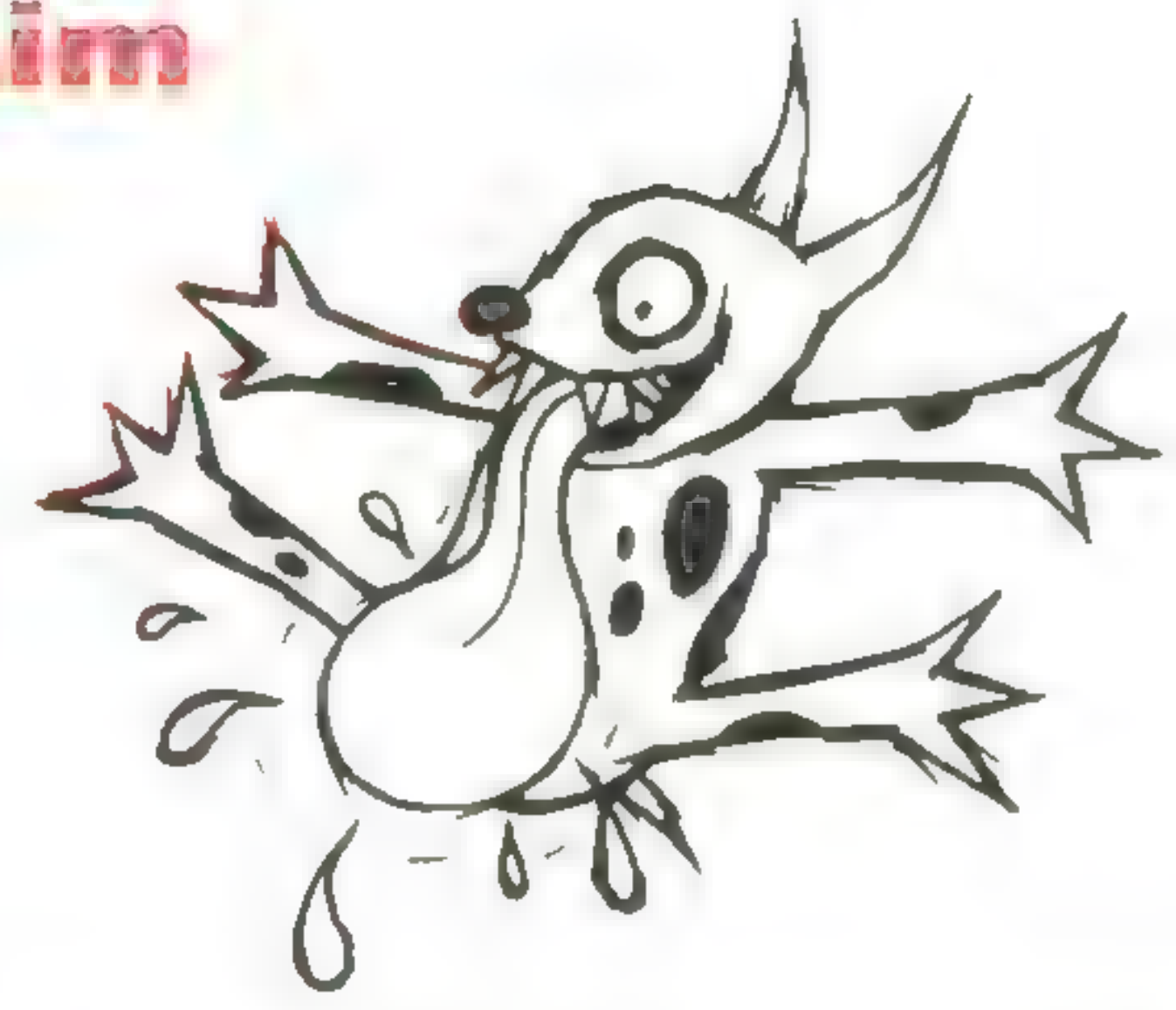
With its bizarro bosses, variety of weapons and great graphics, *Mega Man X 2* is a blast (at least for the two or three days it'll take you to beat it).—**ZACH MESTON**



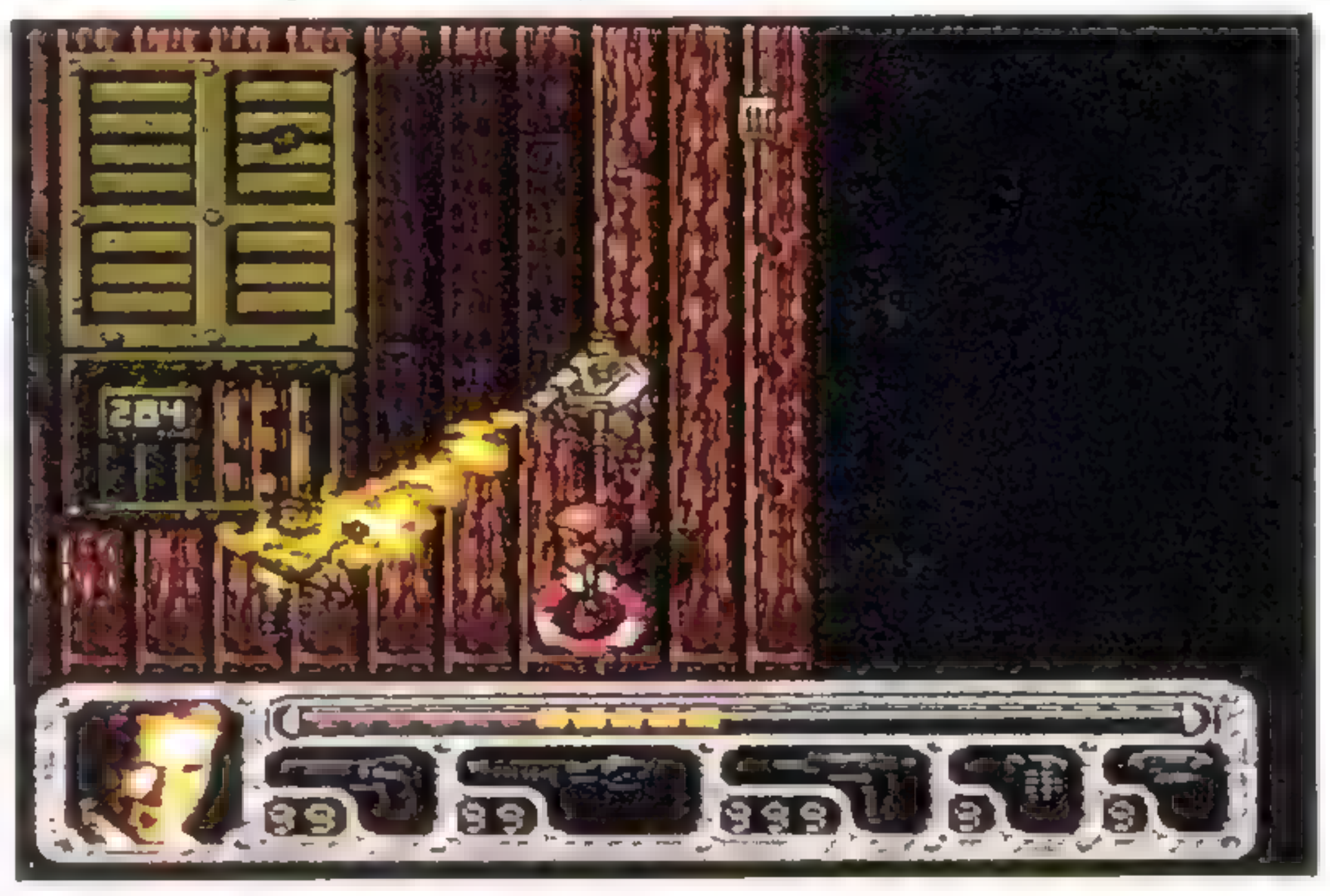
MEGA MAN X2
Official Nintendo Seal of Quality
SOLD BY
CAPCOM
SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

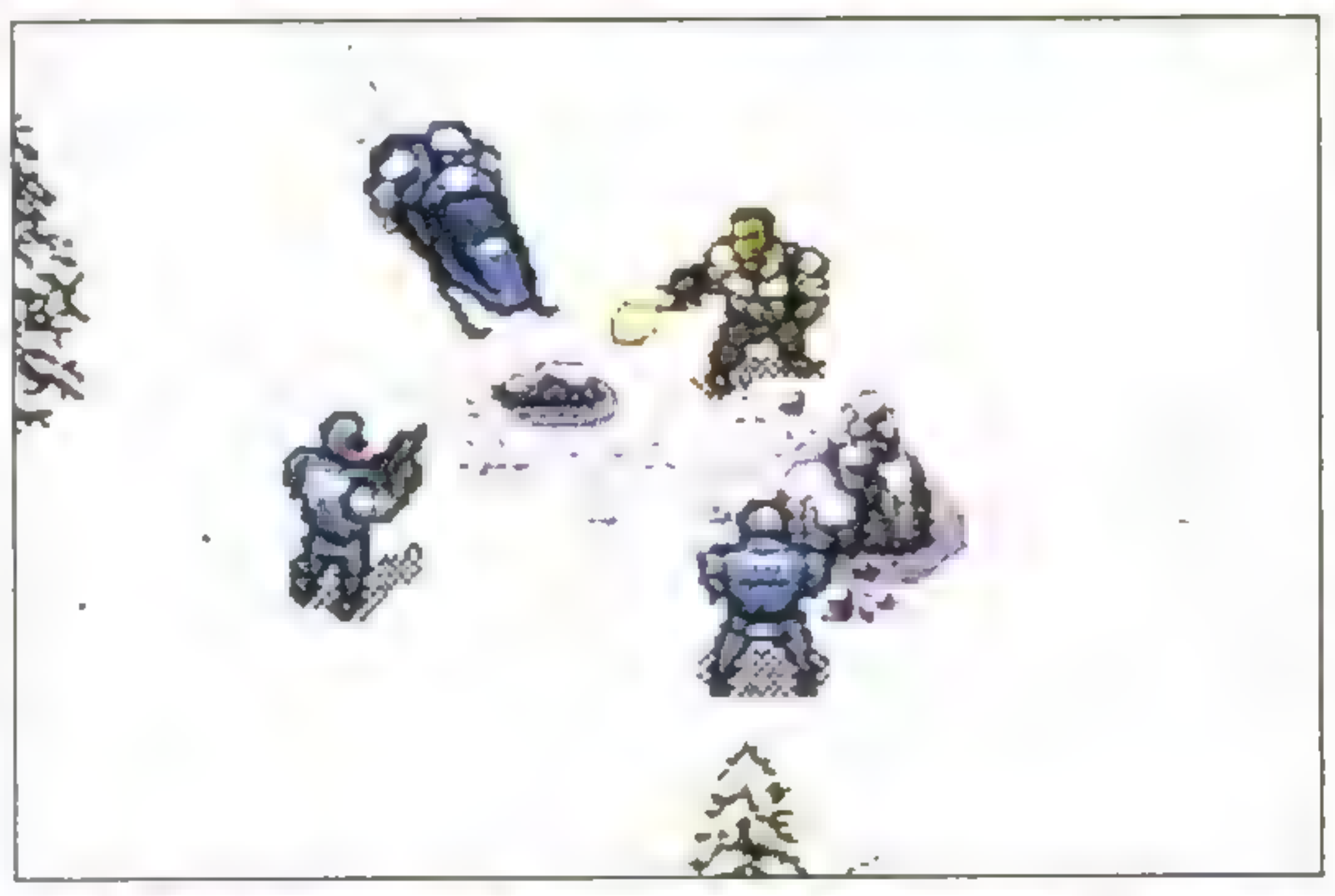
TRUE LIES

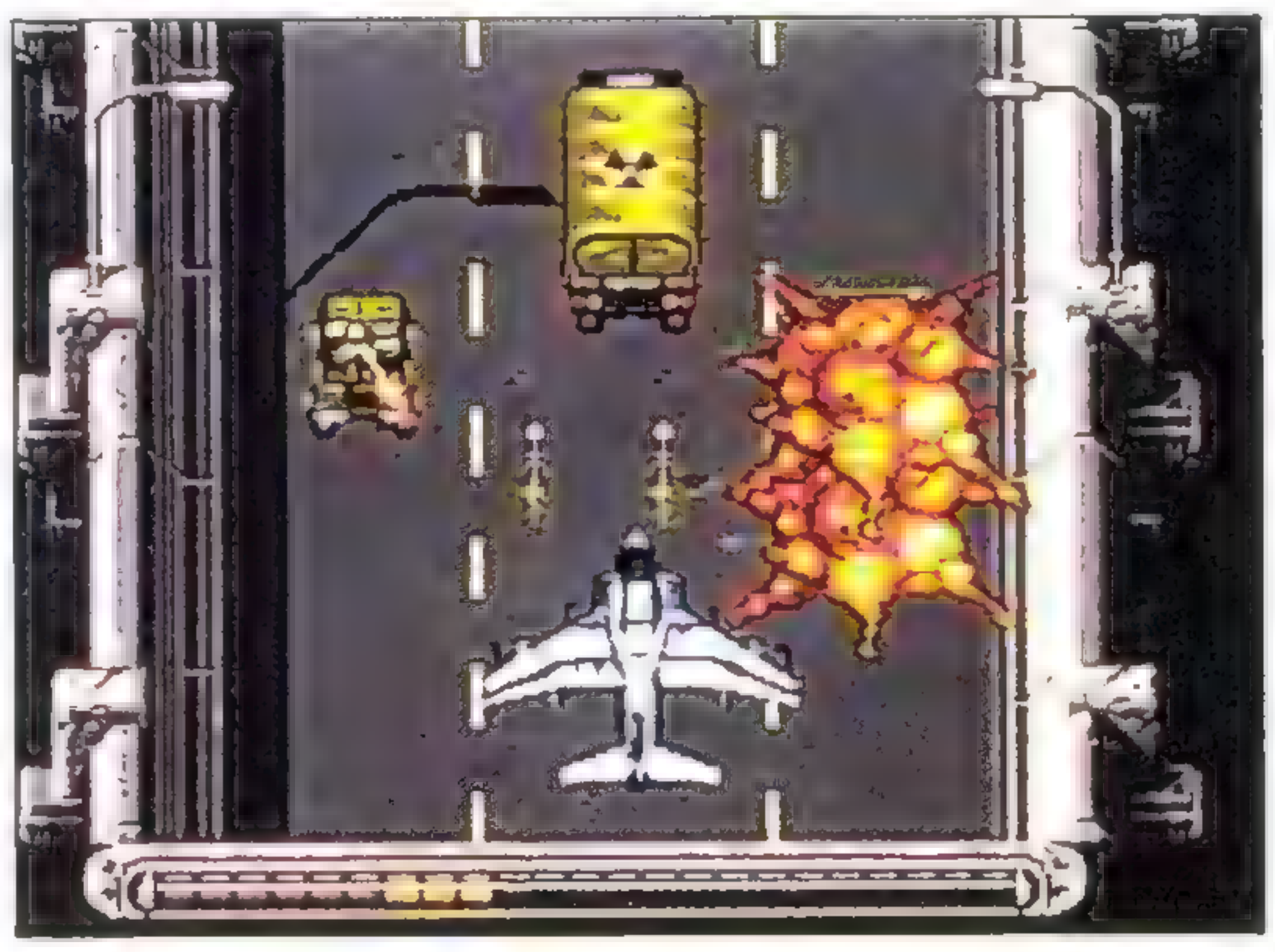
system **SNES**
manufacturer **Acclaim**
graphix **B**
control **B+**
sound **A**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Buy**
overall **B**



Video games based on movies are usually nuthin' to write home about (Last Action Hero, Cliffhanger and *Dracula* spring to mind). For that reason, it was very hard to get excited about a game based on Arnold Schwarzeneggar's come-back hit from last year, *True Lies*. But, much to our surprise, Acclaim's new *True Lies* SNES/Genesis game is actually a terrific adaptation of the big-budget flick.







Chances are good that just about every male video gamer out there has that recessive Ahnuld gene (you know, the one that makes us want to spray bullets into a crowd of innocent people every now and again). And whether they like it or not, it's probably best just to fess up to it. In *True Lies*, you're Harry, posing as a mild-mannered computer salesman but actually working for the elusive Omega Sector government agency on a mission to thwart the Crimson Jihad. Along the way you'll shoot, dive and roll through high-society cocktail parties, ski slopes crawling with snowmobiling assassins and shopping malls catering to AK-47 toting Middle Eastern Bad Guys.

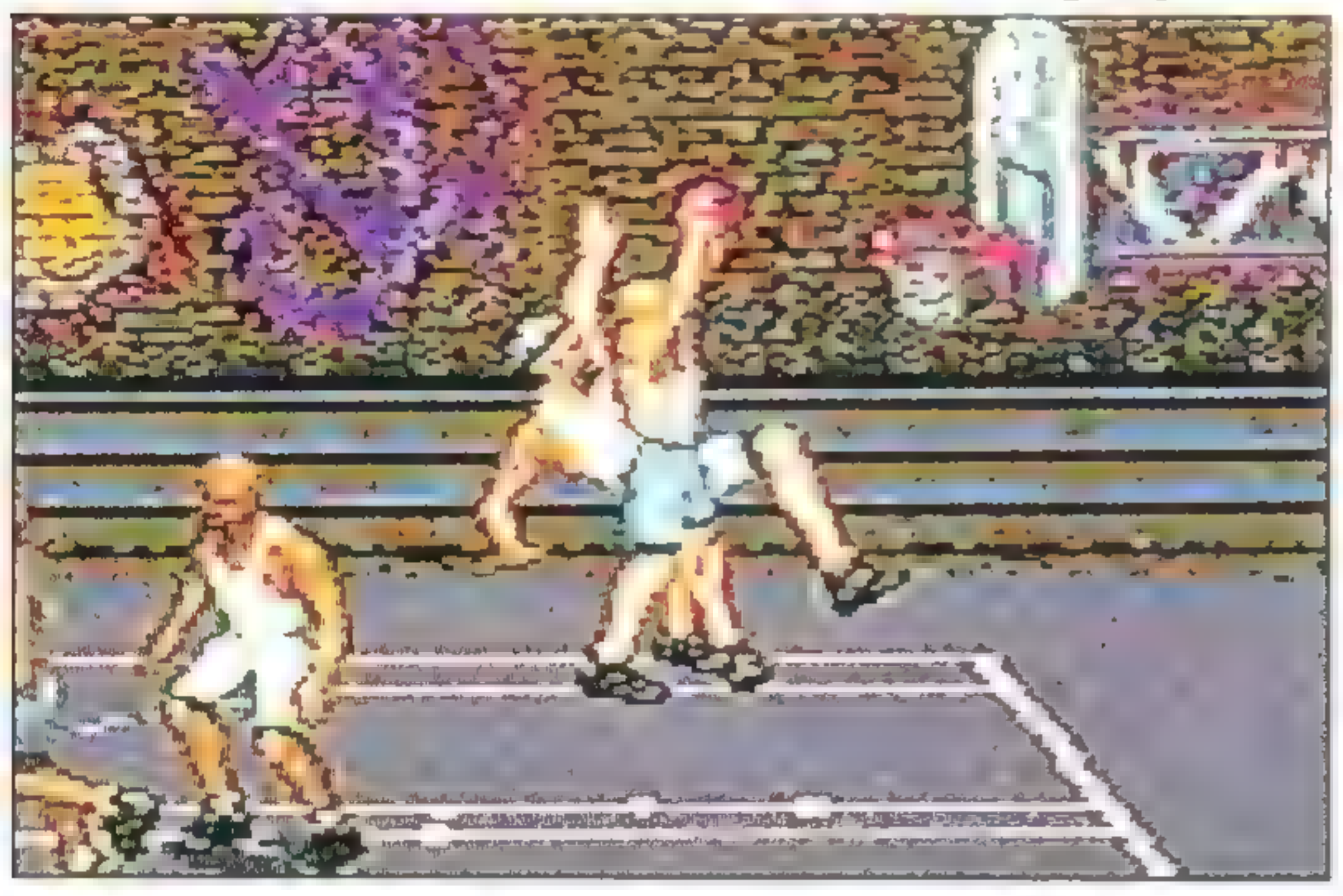
True Lies does a good job of remaining basically faithful to both the plotline and feel of the movie, and can be quite an engaging game (if you can overlook the rather tiny sprites). Many of those classic Ahnuld moves you see all the time in his flicks can be executed in the game, particularly that cool dive-across-the-floor-grab-a-weapon-and-come-up-shooting move he does so well. That smirking Ahnuld homicidal humor is fully in tact as well, with players getting admonished ("watch it, this is an *election* year!") every time they accidentally blow away some innocent bystanders; do that too many times and you may be (gasp) reprimanded and penalized by having to do the whole mission over again!

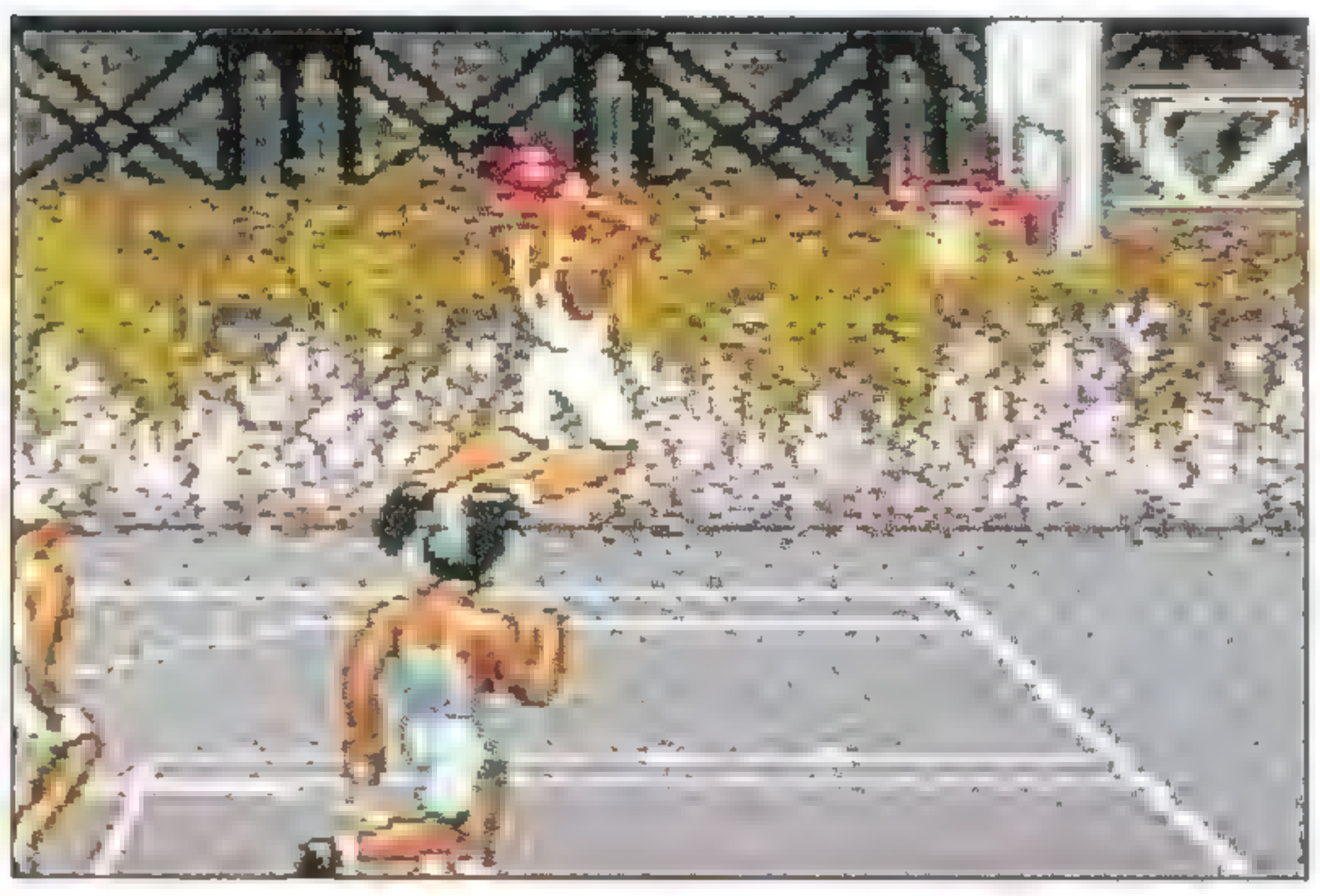
Lots of one-handed Uzi action and jerky, bullet-riddled deaths, and every bit as highbrow and politically sensitive as the film. If the fallen bodies actually piled up on the floor instead of just disappearing after a few seconds, *True Lies* would be a truly *great* game. Instead, it's just an excellent game that mirrors its film counterpart in almost every way.

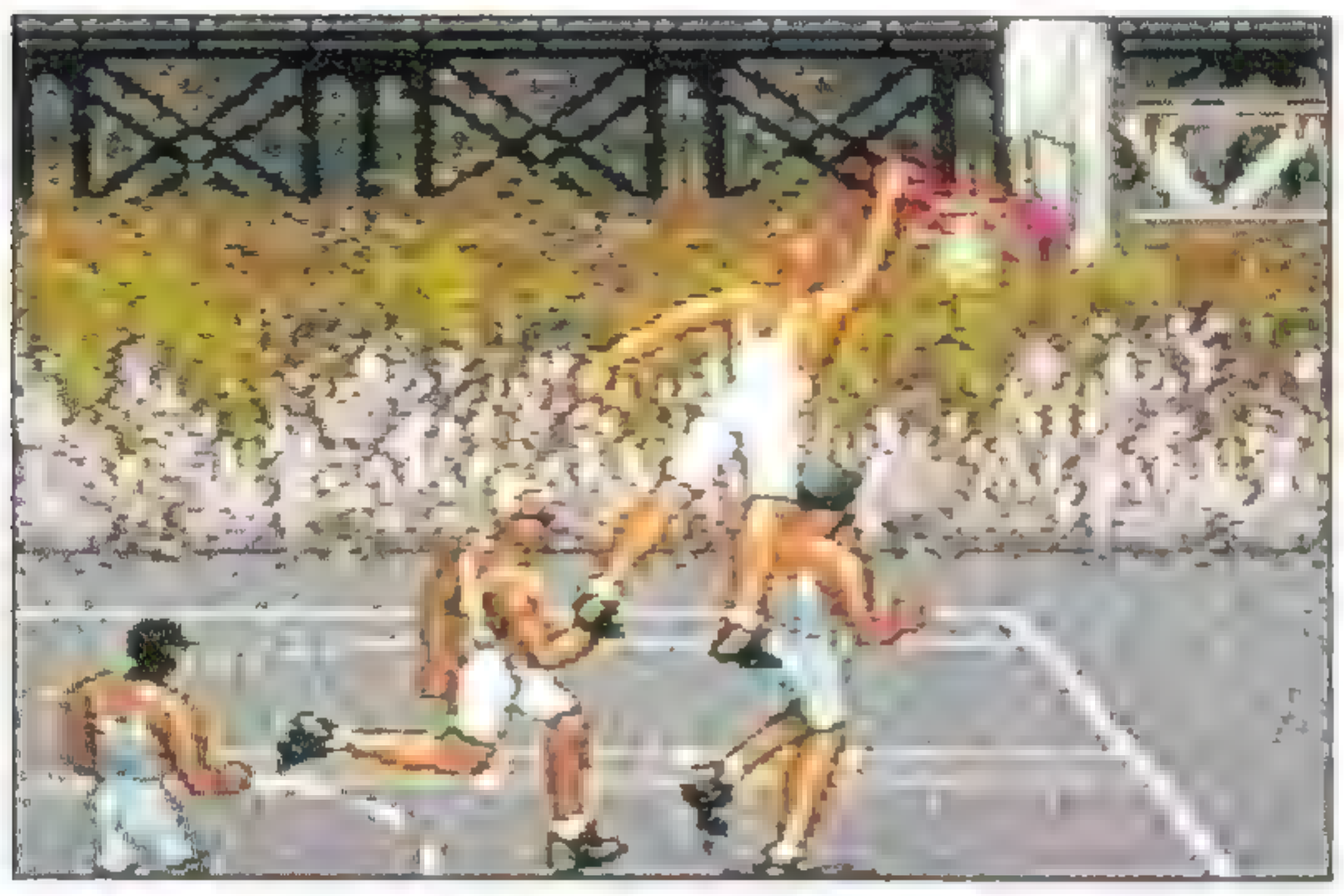
So don't just stand there—kill something!—**CHRIS HUDAK**

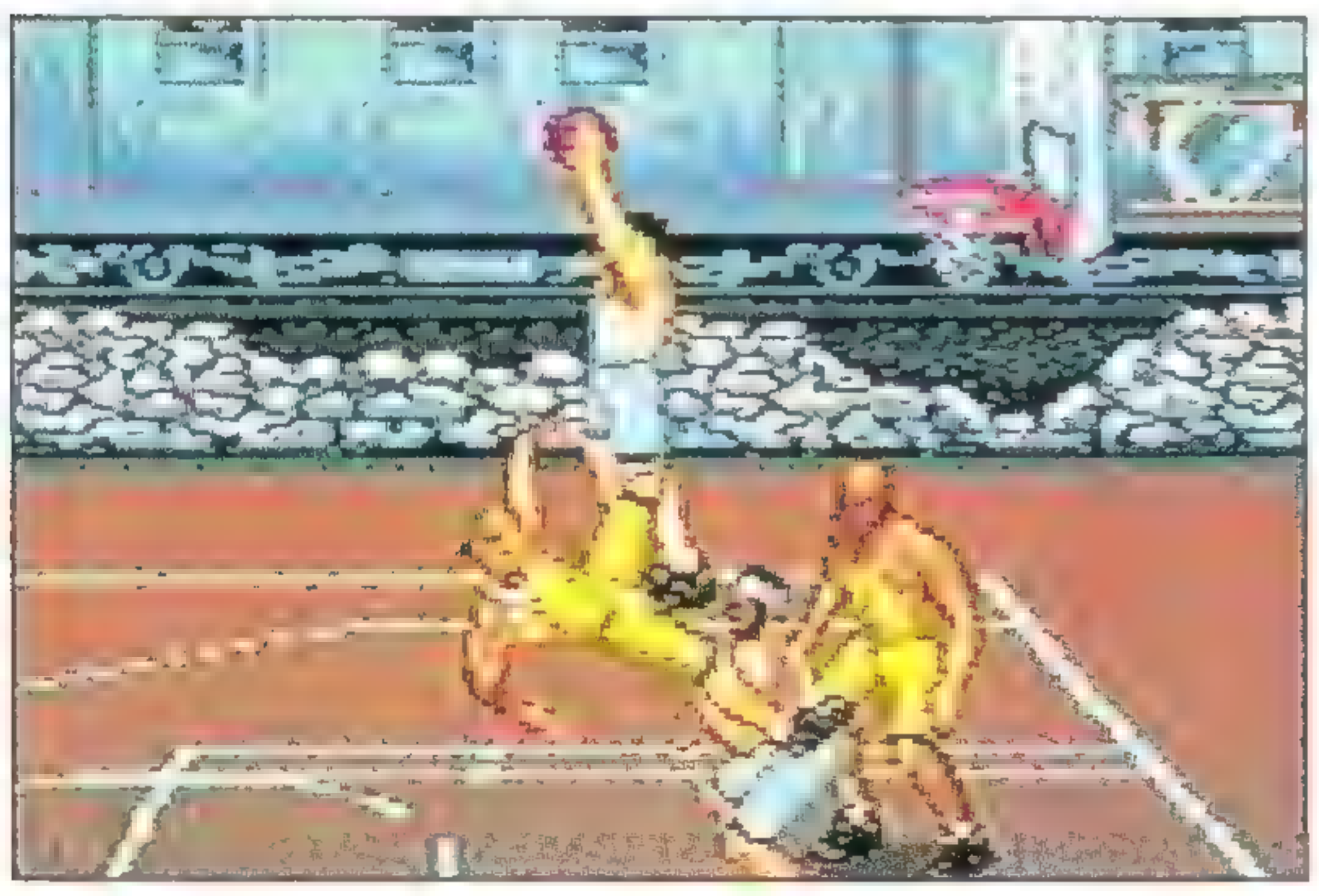
BARKLEY SHUTUPANDJAM2

system **Genesis**
manufacturer **Accolade**
graphix **B-**
control **C**
sound **D**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **C-**









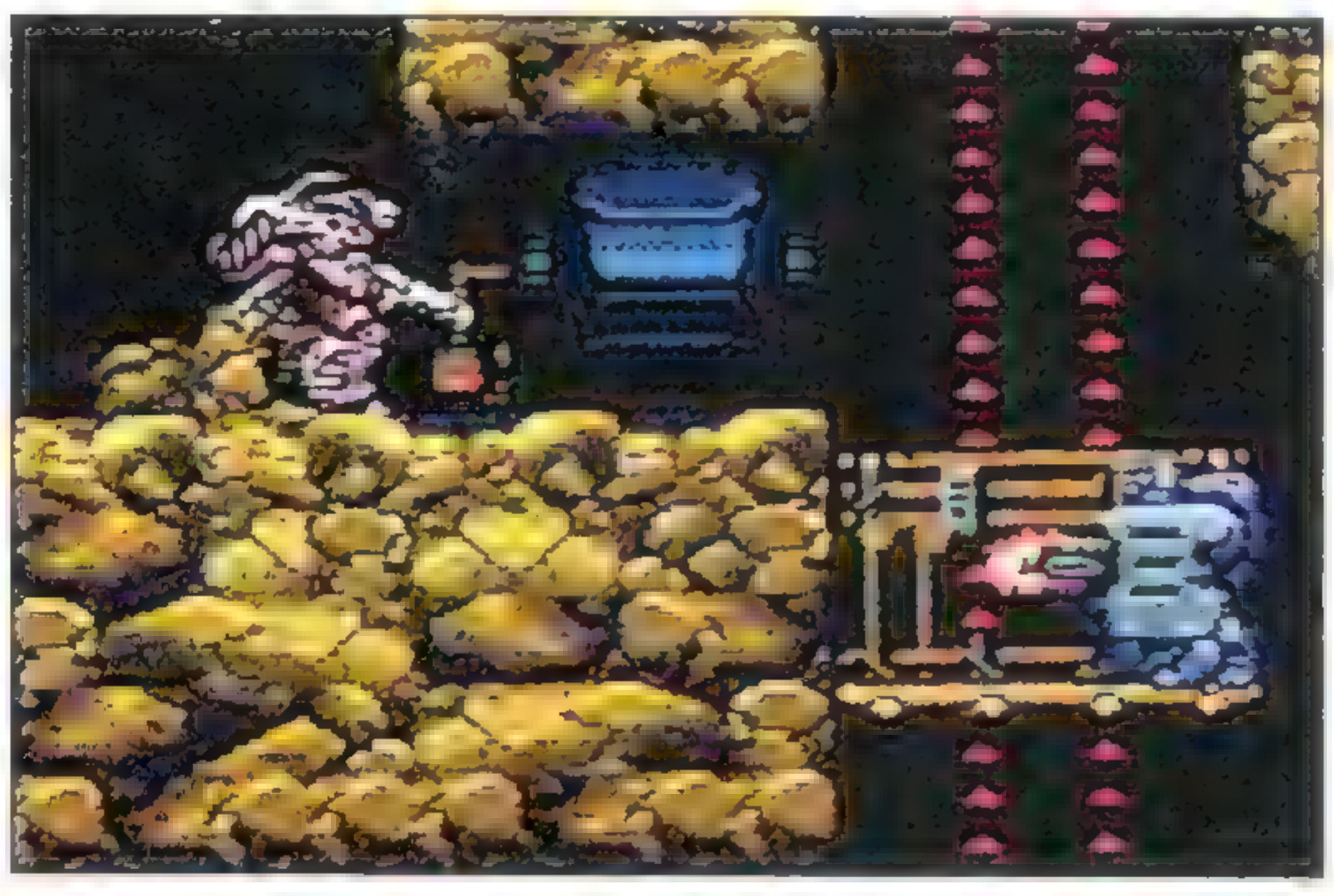
Of all the lame-ass video games released last year, Accolade's Barkley Shut Up *And Jam!* was easily among the most ill-conceived and poorly executed. As Accolade's answer to Acclaim's mighty home version of *NBA Jam*, *Barkley* featured crummy graphics and sound, weak control and just plain sucky gameplay—in other words, it wasn't even in the same league as *NBA Jam*. Unless Accolade was actually able to cash in on the *NBA Jam* craze and sell a decent amount of *Barkley* carts (you poor suckers), it seems rather puzzling that they would even attempt a *Barkley* sequel (not to mention—did anyone even ask for a sequel?). Maybe they're just trying to ram *Barkley* down our throats like they're doing with Bubsy the annoying bobcat. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that *Barkley Shut Up And Jam!* is back, like it or not.

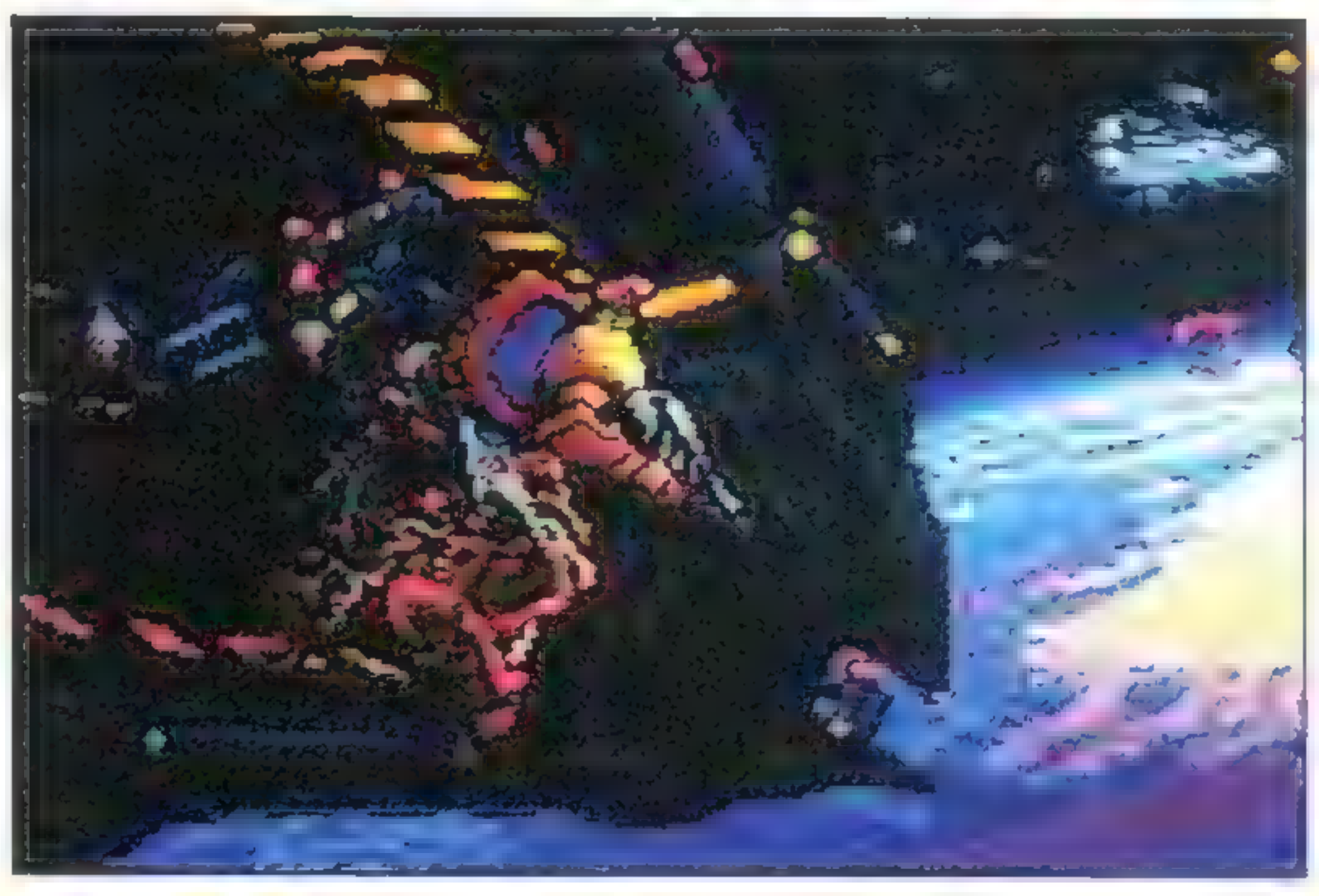
Essentially the same as its predecessor, *Barkley 2* is a two-on-two b-ball contest with ten different players—one of them Sir Charles, the other nine fictional boyz n' the hood. You can play a single exhibition game or a series of games on bizarre outdoor courts across the land, from the mean streets of New York to the desert sands of Phoenix. You can pass, shoot, steal, dunk and commit flagrant fouls in the best Sir Charles tradition. *Barkley 2* does offer a few improvements, among them better graphics and animation. However, the biggest thing that made the original *Barkley* so lame—gameplay—is almost identical, and that's a bad thing.

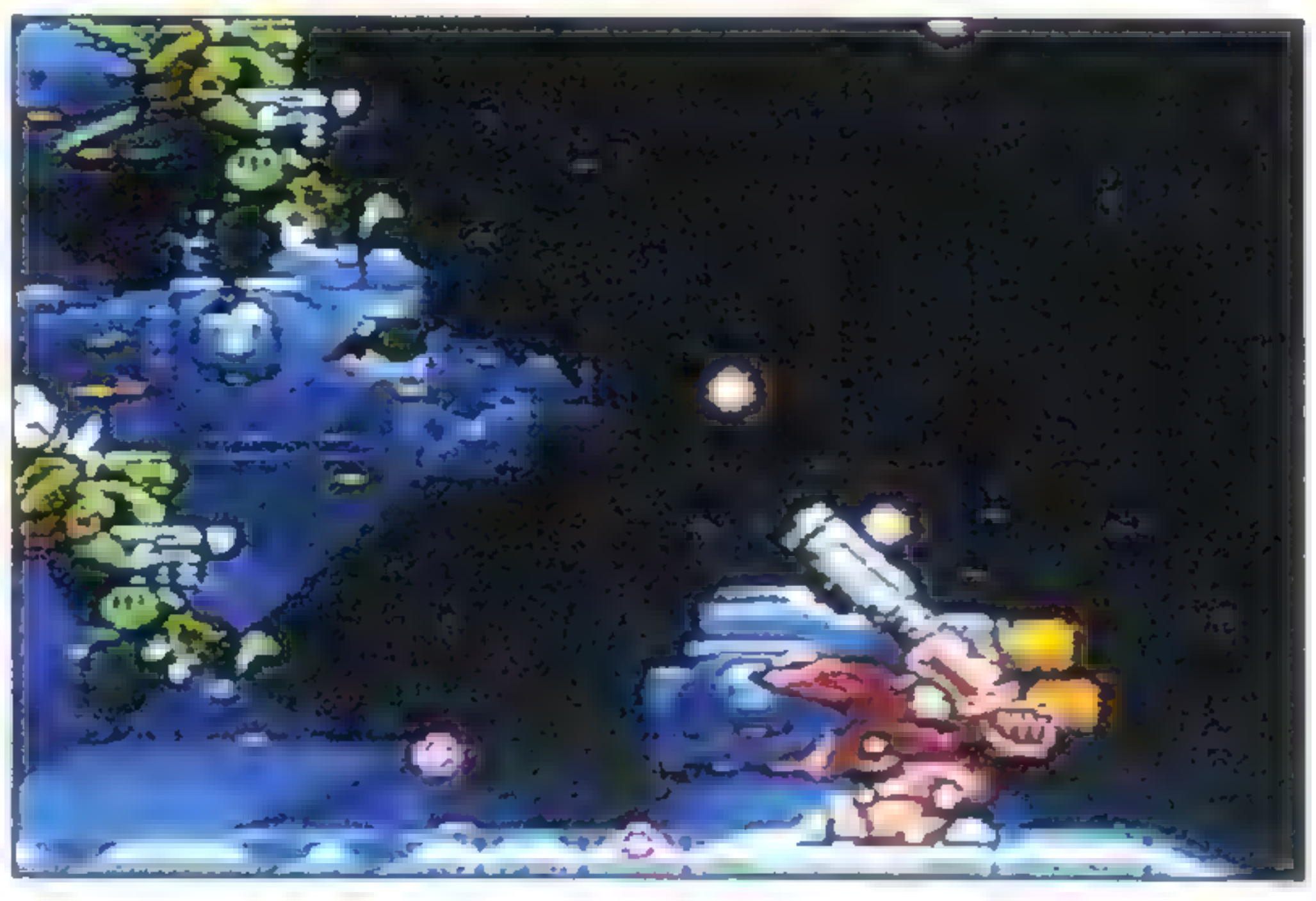
With qualities like these, it makes you wonder why anyone would ever want—or need—*Barkley 2* when they could just get the vastly superior *NBA Jam TE* and enjoy real NBA players, better graphics, sound and gameplay and way cooler dunks? It's a puzzling question, and it's obvious that Accolade still doesn't have the answer. **—ZACH MESTON**

METALWARRIOR

system **SNES**
manufacturer **Konami**
graphix **A**
control **B+**
sound **A**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Buy**
overall **A**







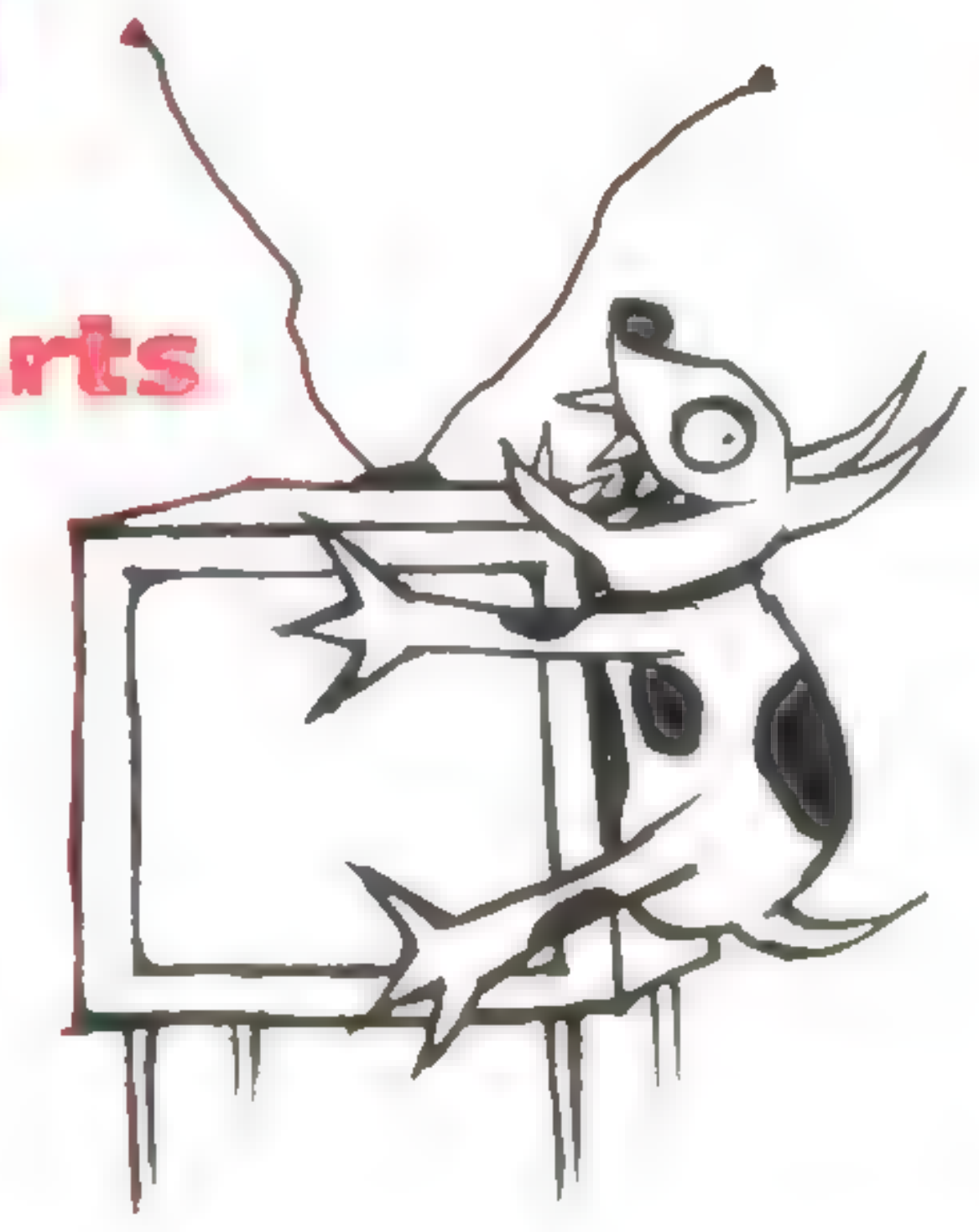
Despite the goofy title, Konami's Metal Warrior is a slick, fun game that's guaranteed to eat up lots of valuable study time. As a United Earth Government space-armor pilot, you take on a wide range of missions, from simple search-and-destroy raids to hostage rescues to starship defense duties to commandeering active enemy ships. Prowl and sneak and dodge down the labyrinthine corridors of bases and ships or blast your own messy path through walls, catwalks and equipment. There's lots of variety in *Metal Warrior*, enough to keep any gamer interested for quite a while.

Metal Warrior is full of nice touches that give it a bit of an edge over the standard space-shooter fare, like the fact that damage is shown by the relative appearance (and performance) of your armor rather than by the predictable bar/percentage, or like how some objectives require the human pilot to leave the safety of the battlesuit and rush around—exposed, panicked, tiny and very, *very* vulnerable—until he can return to his armor (or find some better, weirder armor lying around unattended). Sitting there in a pressure situation, wondering whether or not you should risk leaving your current damaged armor, adds the element of suspense to the game. It's yet another example of how a fairly standard game concept can be made fresh and exciting. Also cool is the two-player mode that allows head-to-head action against another player in split screen competition, and the option of pulling out a sabre-sword to bash things when you get in close to an object. The controls in *Metal Warrior* are nice and tight with good response. Even the little things, like entering your name at the beginning, then being referred to throughout the game by your actual name, help make *Metal Warrior* an above-average contest.

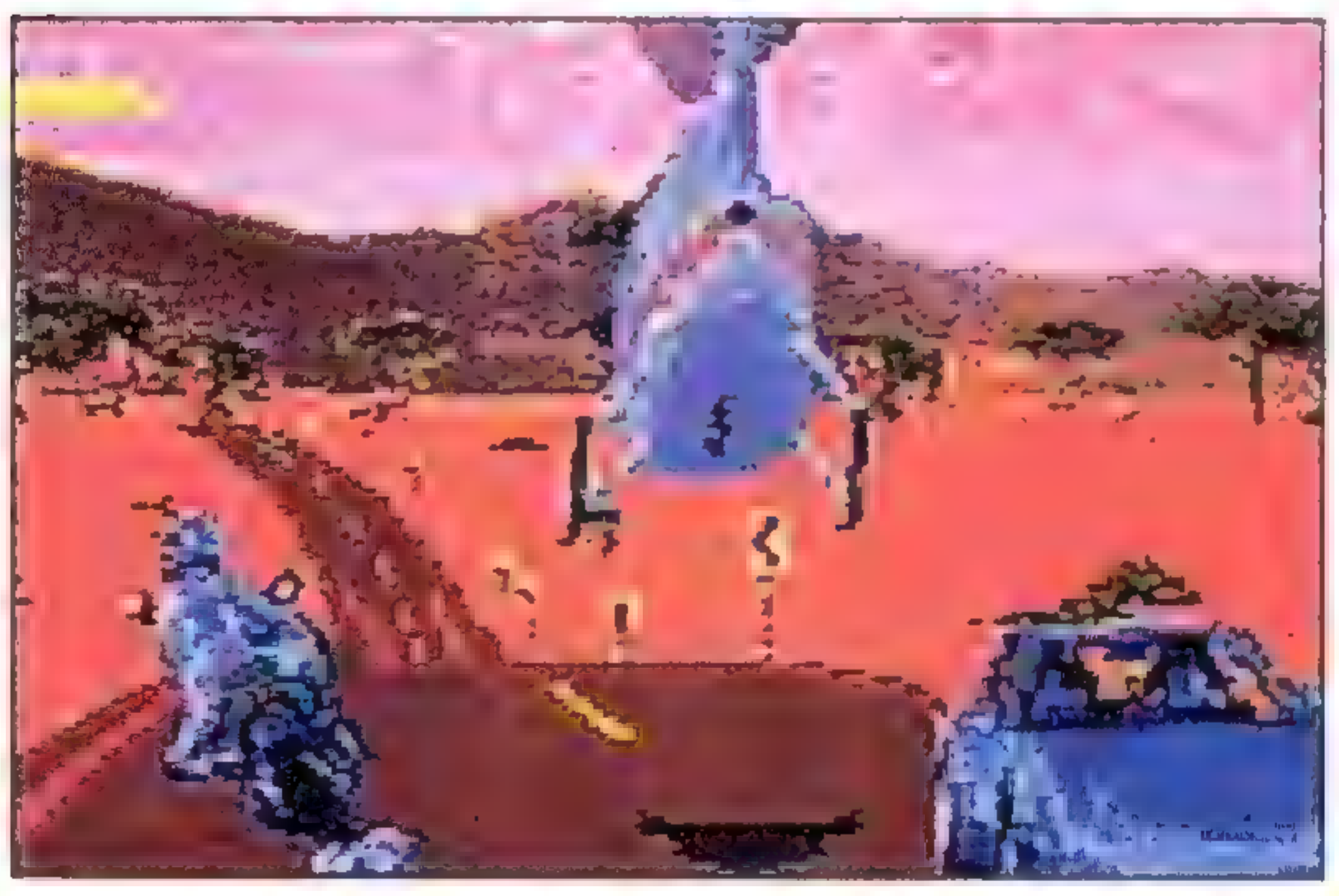
Anime-style story screens, hulking, bizarro battlemechs bristling with crude and exotic weapons, spacecraft built along the battleship lines of the vessels in *Starblazers*, lots of continues and powerups and destruction, destruction, destruction. With qualities like these, how can you go wrong? **—CHRIS HUDAK**

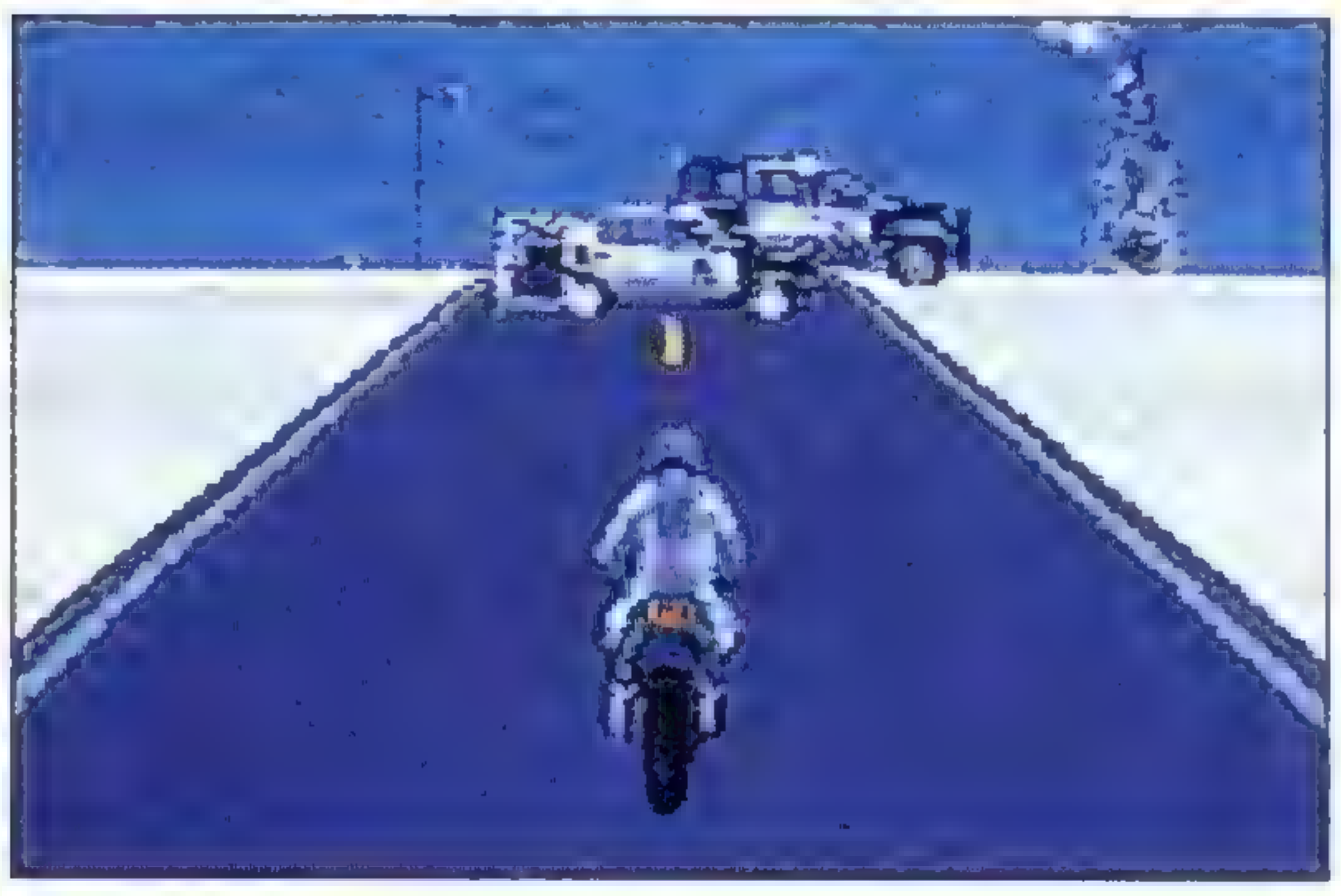
ROADRASH3

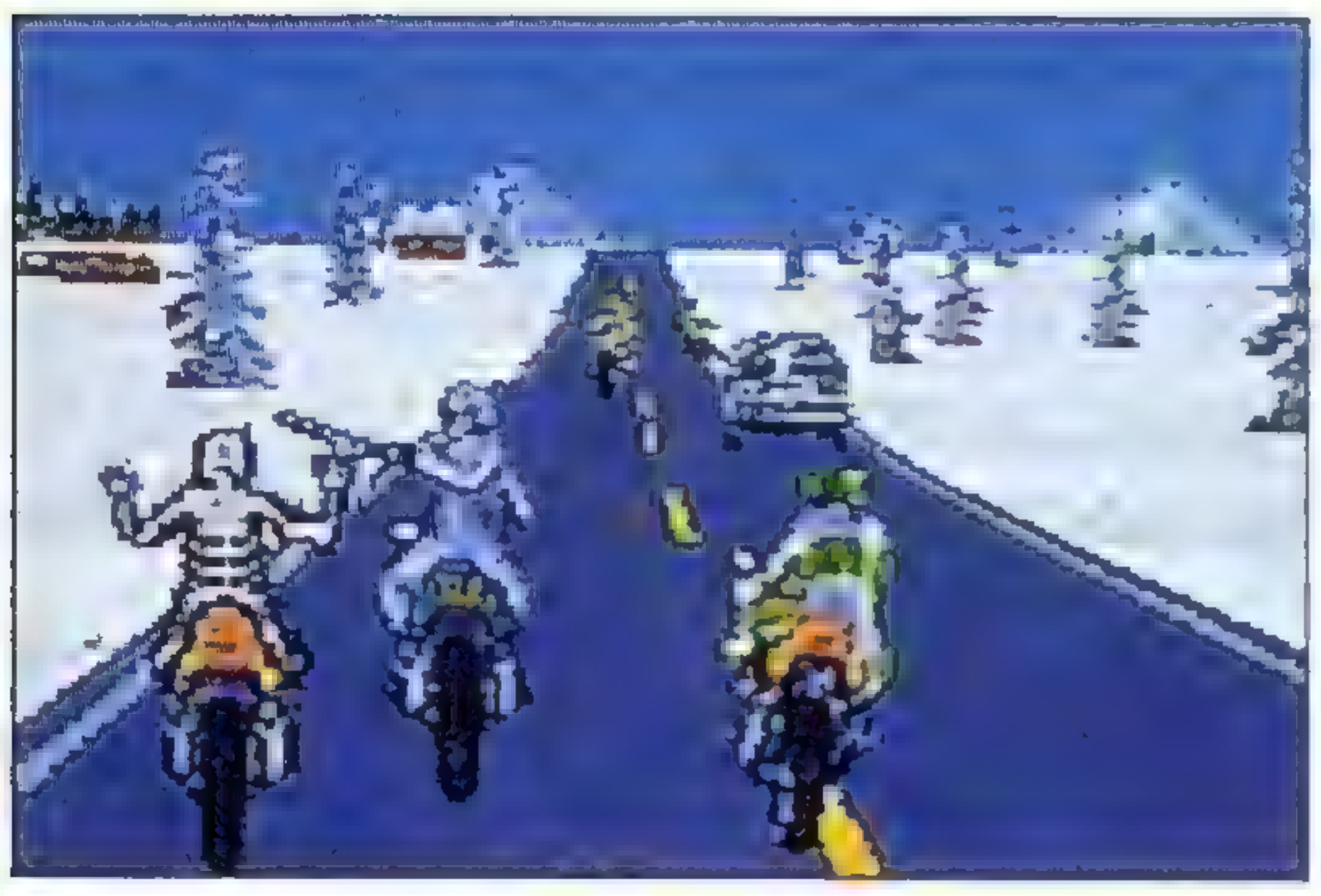
system **Genesis**
manufacturer **Electronic Arts**
graphix **B+**
control **A-**
sound **C**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Buy**
overall **A-**



The rash is back! Road Rash, the reigning king of motorcycle racing games, has returned for its third appearance on the Genesis. And even though there hasn't been many challengers in the way of 16-bit cycle games over the years, *Road Rash* still smokes the competition.







Compared to its two predecessors, *Road Rash 3* is essentially more of the same, but offers enough improvements and differences to keep it from being a mere clone in a new package. Among the new elements is the option of racing on seven international tracks, from the sands of Australia to Germany's snow-covered hills and even Japan's pedestrian-clogged roadways. Identity is something the tracks in the first two *Road Rash* installments have always lacked, but *Road Rash 3* is loaded with it. Each track features its own set of obstacles, like dogs that yelp when you run them down and various other animals scurrying across the asphalt. The occasional ramp on the side of the road can also provide some new thrills as you and your crotch rocket take to the air like never before. And speaking of air, now you must watch the skies for a police helicopter that'll try to use its dangerous skids to knock you on your ass.

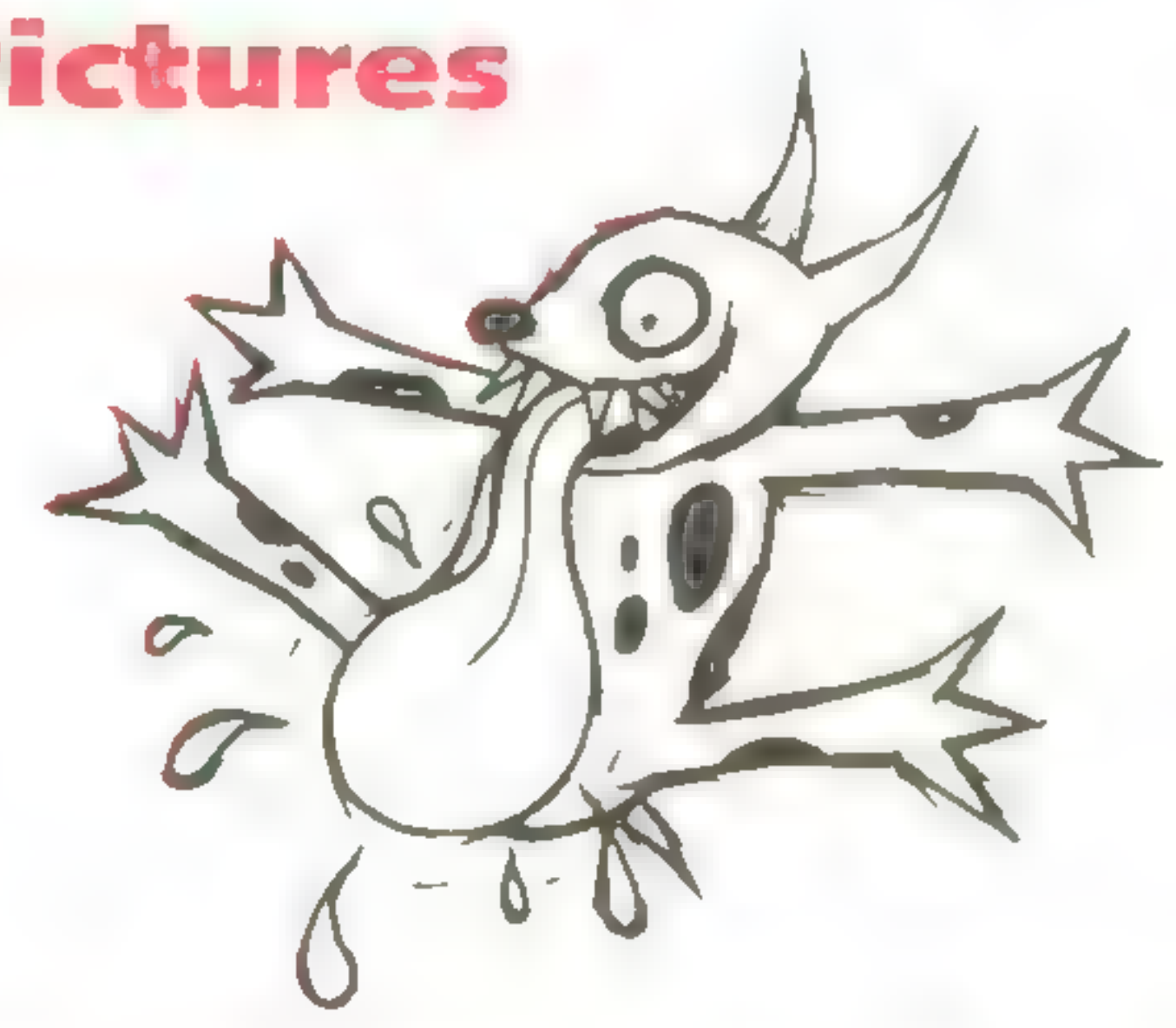
But barreling down the road at 120 m.p.h. on two wheels isn't the only thing that makes *Road Rash* one of the all-time great racing contests. No, it's the weapons. Weapons? That's right, weapons: steel chains, billy clubs, crowbars, electronic cattle prods, mace—if it hurts, you can use it in *Road Rash 3* to send the competition skidding across the blacktop. *Road Rash* isn't just a race, it's a full-scale brawl—and the element of violence only adds to the thrill of the race.

As for the look and feel of this new installment in the *RR* series, both the graphics and control boast slight improvements. Nothing earth-shattering (and not even remotely close to the brilliant 3DO version), but just enough to make *Road Rash 3* a solid effort. The sounds are a mess, but that's a minor gripe. The added option of purchasing upgrades for your bike is also a neat improvement.

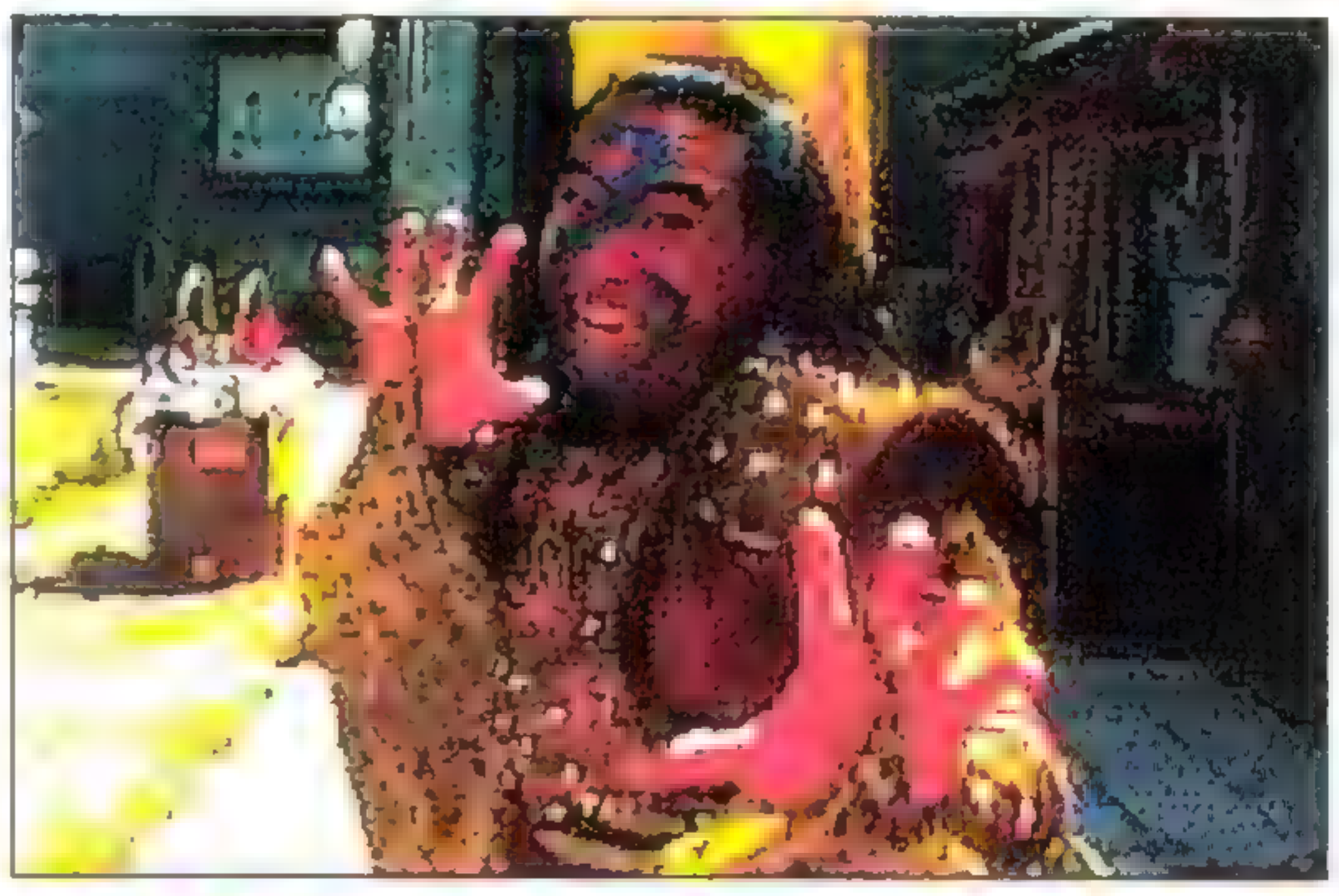
If your Genesis library is still without a copy of *Road Rash*, then *Road Rash 3* is an essential buy, particularly if you like racing games with a generous helping of violence. But if you already own the first two and don't feel that a few minor improvements are worth the $50 you could spend on another cart, then think twice.—**JK**

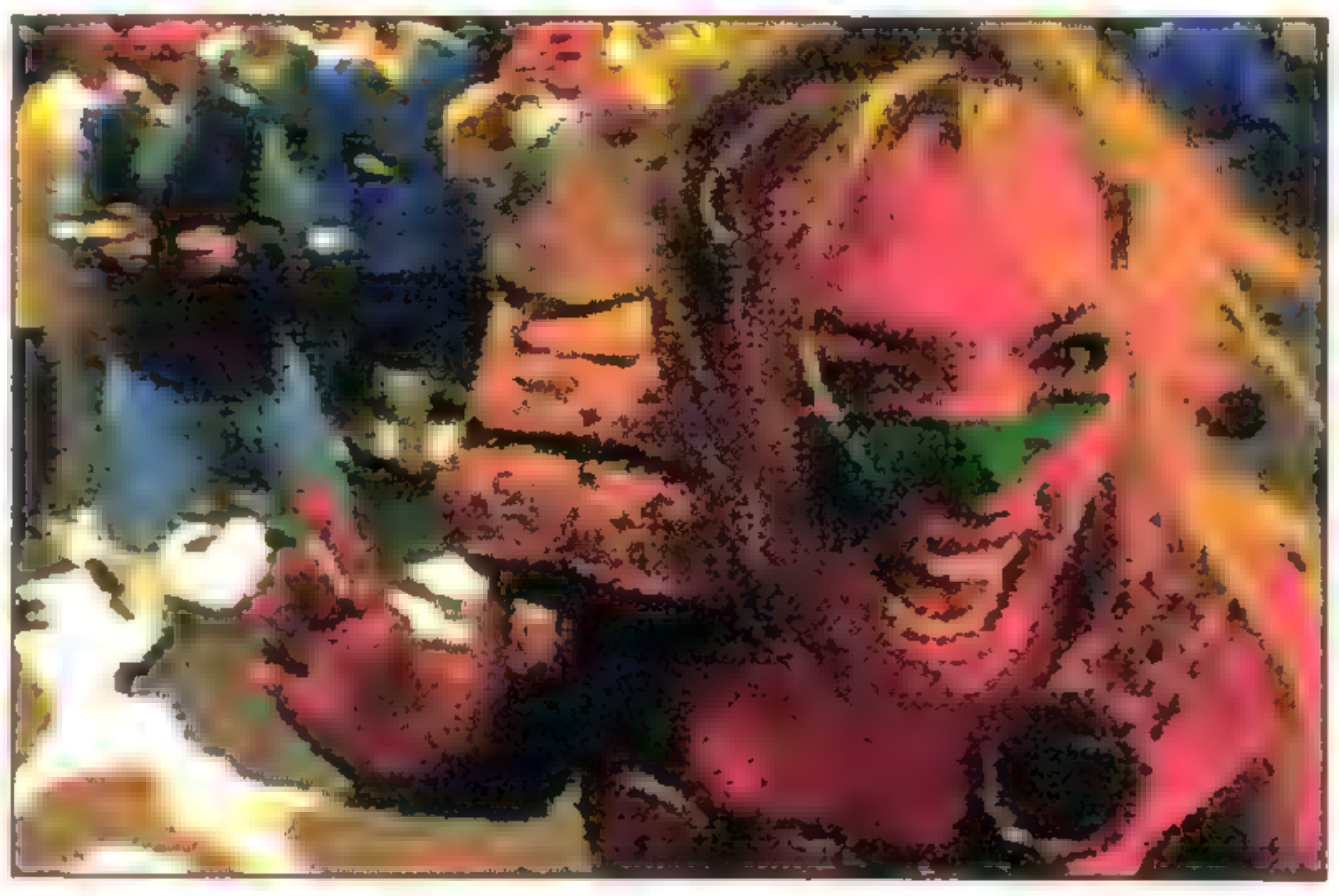
SUPREMEWARRIOR

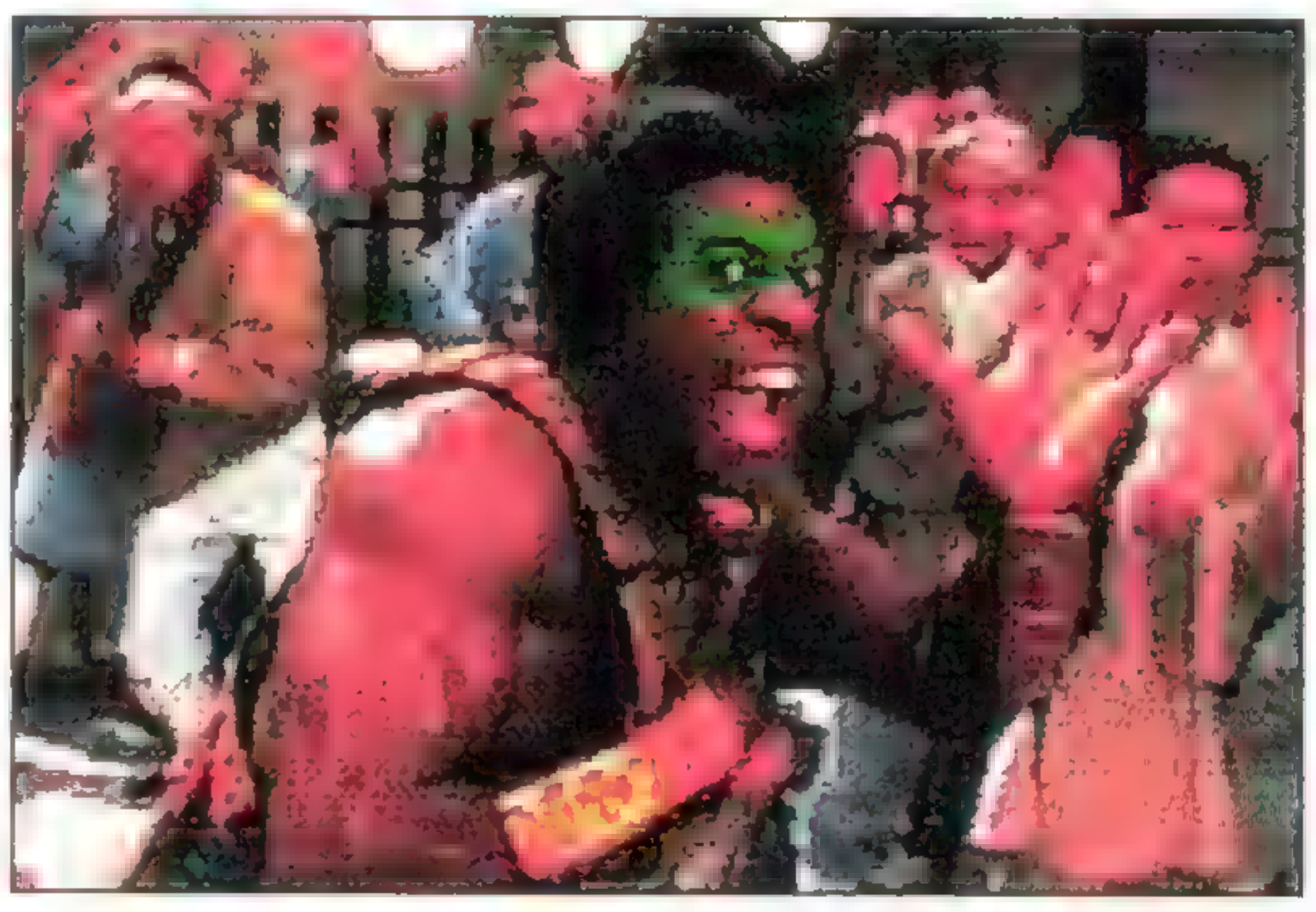
system **3DO**
manufacturer **Digital Pictures**
graphix **A**
control **C**
sound **B**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **B-**



In almost any area of technology, being revolutionary generally goes hand-in-hand with being guinea pigs. The Digital Pictures company has continually released products which they hope will one day set new standards in the world of video games—and in doing so are the ones taking all the risks. Games like *Slam City With Scottie Pippen*, *Corpse Killer* for the Sega CD/3DO and *Supreme Warrior* for the 3DO are nothing short of groundbreaking in nature—and yet that doesn't necessarily make them any more fun than a traditional side-scroller or fighting game.







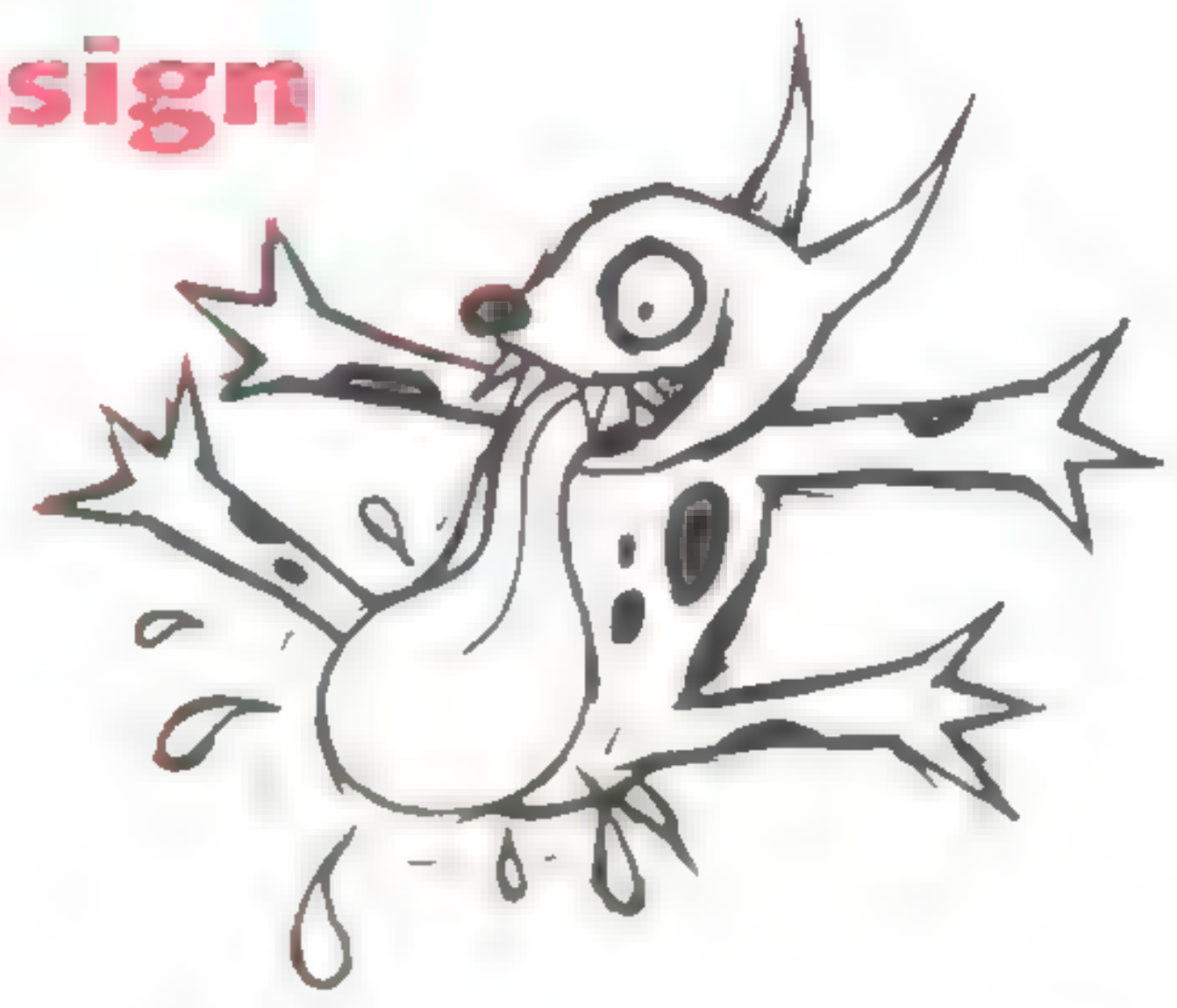
Supreme Warrior is the first fighting game that uses a first-person perspective as opposed to the standard side-view found in more fighting contests. What this means is that, as you fight, you stare directly into the eyes of your live-actor opponent. All you see of your own body are your digitized hands and feet. And because of this unique perspective, controlling the action in *Supreme Warrior* can be incredibly difficult. Compared to standard fighting games like *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter II*, the full motion video and awkward controls make scoring a hit in *Supreme Warrior*, even against the easiest opponent, a major task. By the time you stop glowing over actually landing a good right hook, your opponent has beaten you senseless. It's all a matter of timing, and quite different from the type of timing you've grown accustomed to with games like *Mortal Kombat* and *Street Fighter*. Luckily, should you actually make any progress, there is a save feature.

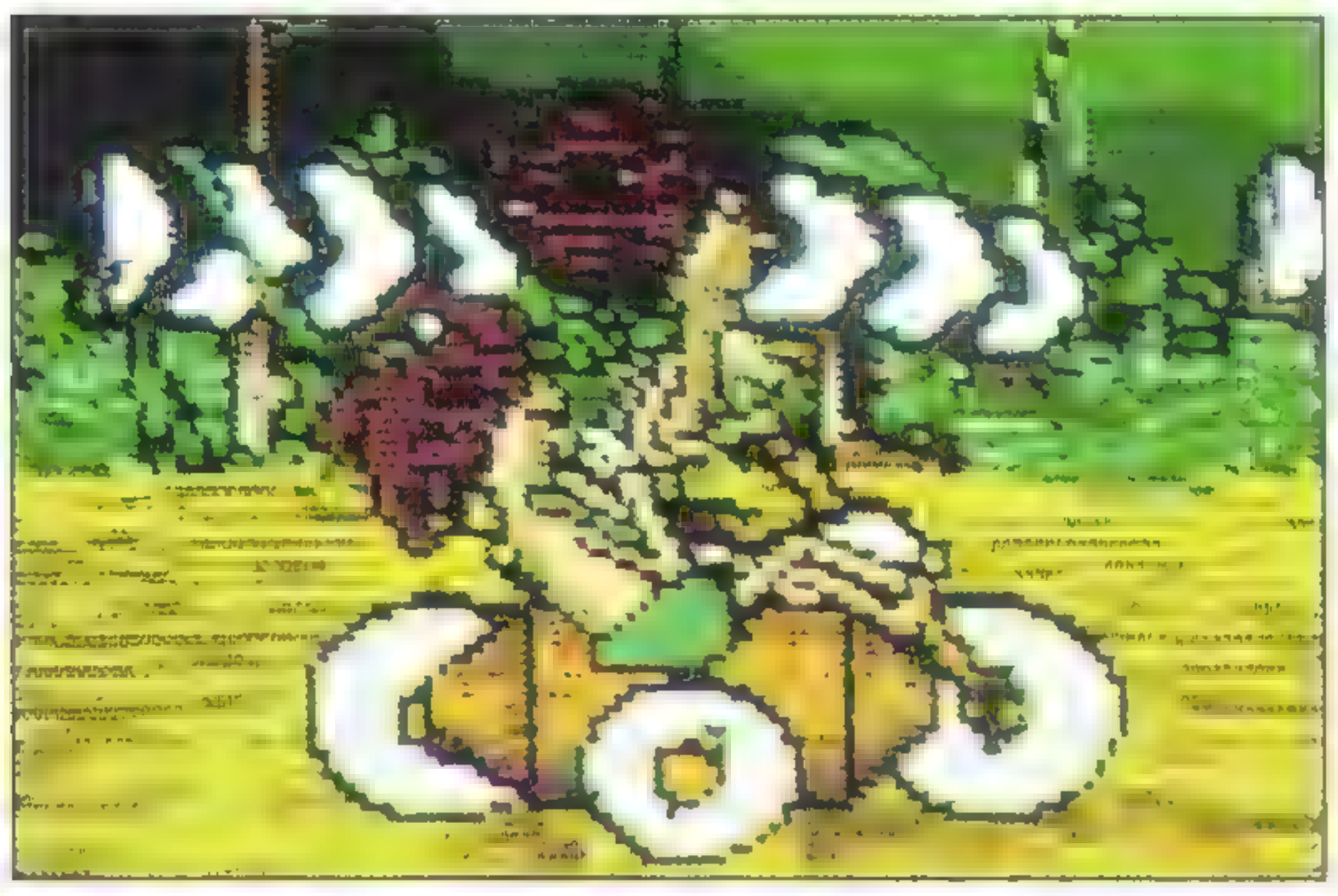
Unlike most fighting games, *Supreme Warrior* actually has some degree of class. With its ancient proverbs and teachings, oriental overtones and authentic settings, this game is an intelligent and thoughtful affair for those who don't appreciate bloody finishing moves and hokey storylines. There's also some quality acting, particularly from the girl who coaches you during a fight and from the fighters themselves (none of whom come across like the WWF rejects you get in other such games).

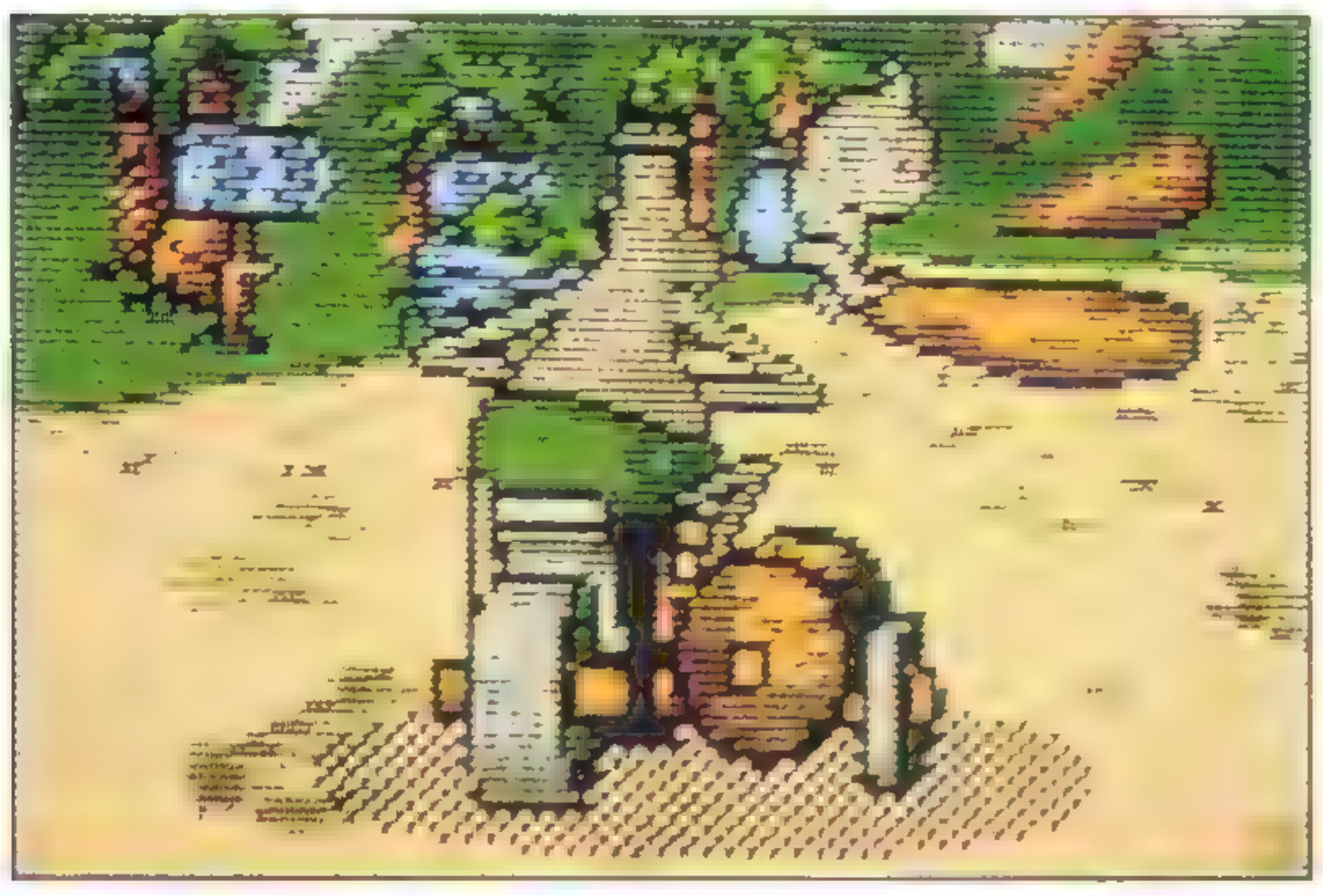
If you're a sucker for fighting games and you're tired of wasting money on generic beat-'em-ups, *Supreme Warrior* might do just the trick. It's got some truly excellent qualities that could one day set new standards among video game fighters. However, it'll probably take some time before this type of contest is perfected—and only then will it see global acceptance.—**JK**

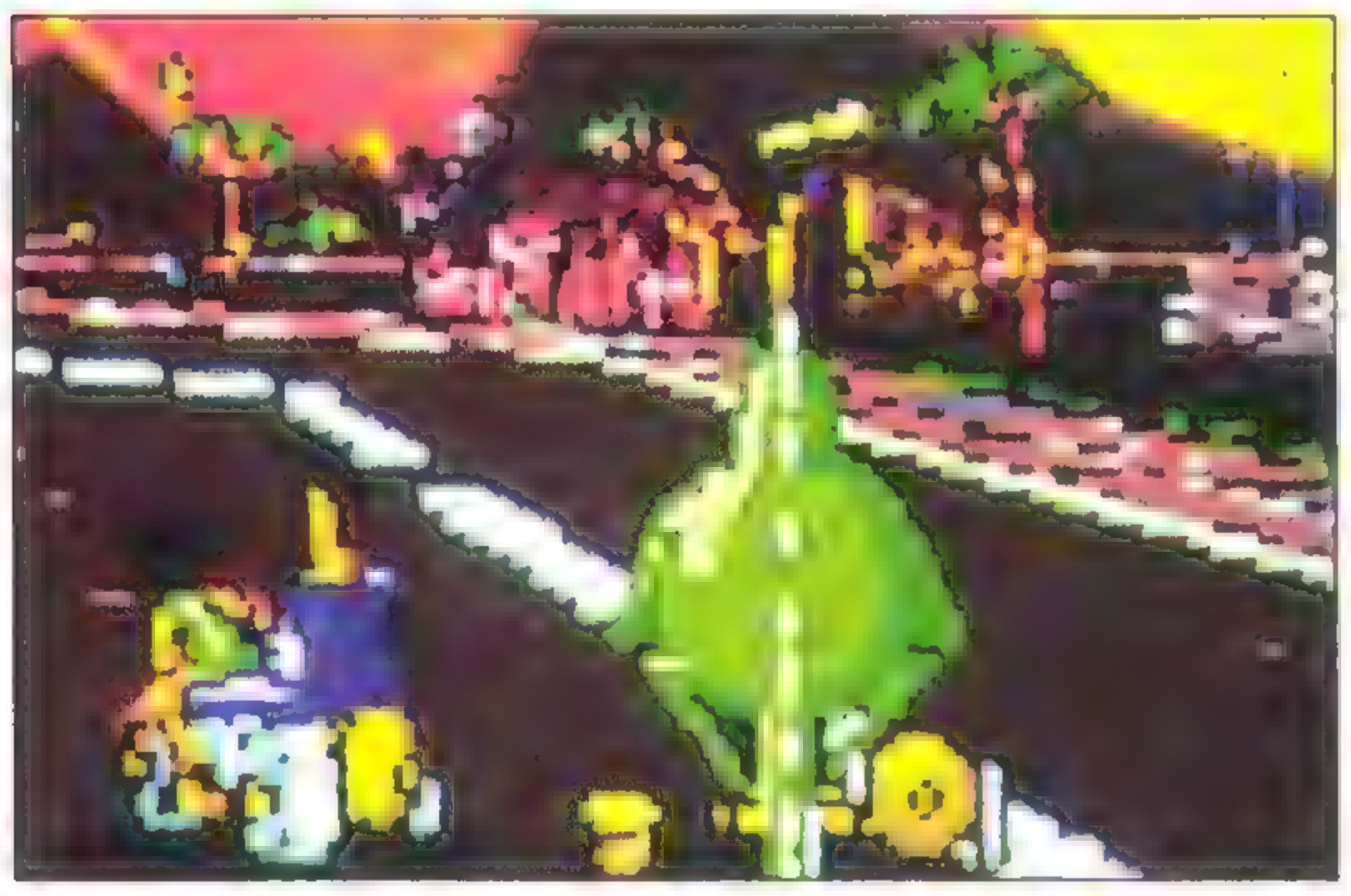
B.C.RACERS

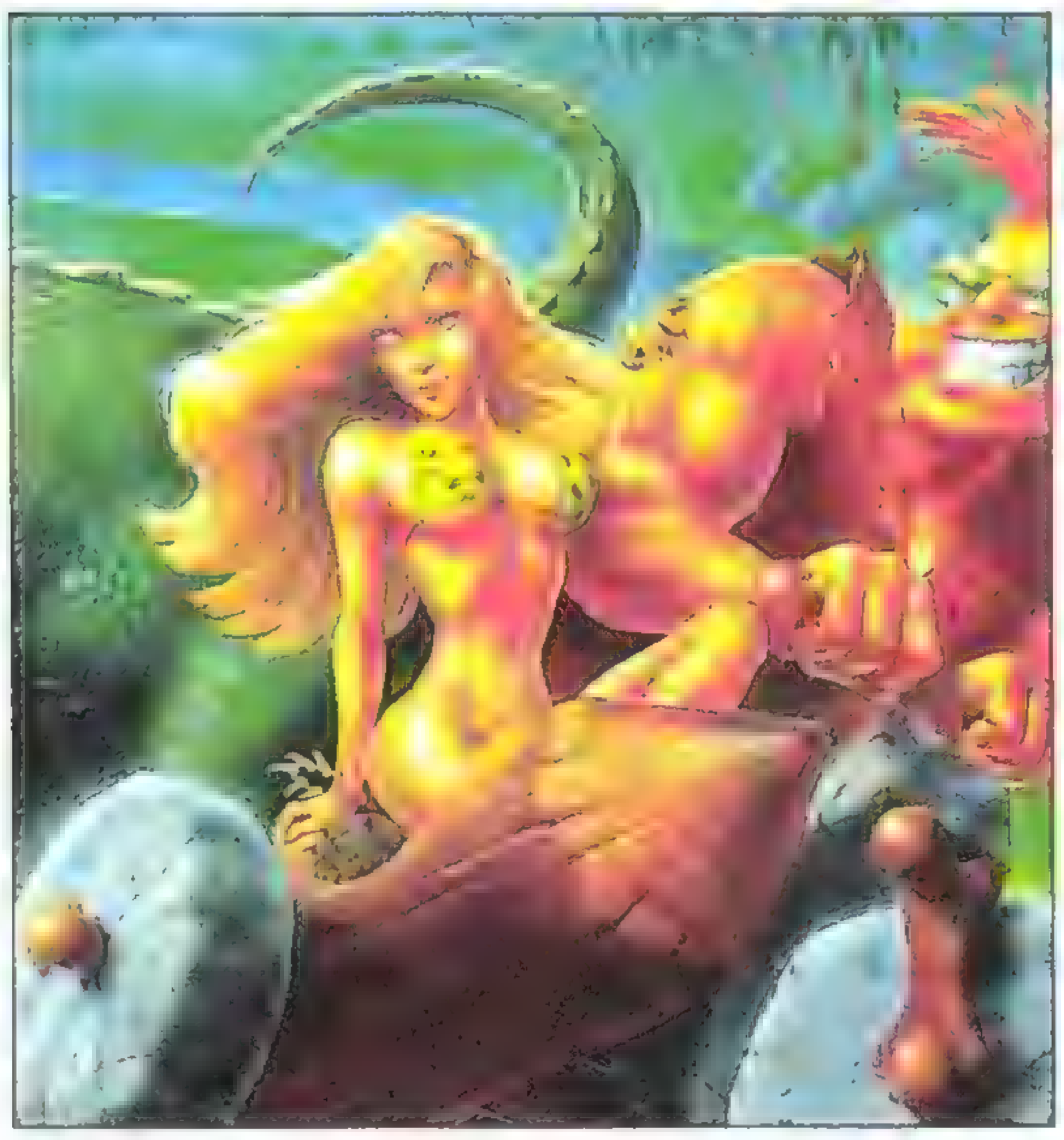
system **Sega CD**
manufacturer **Core Design**
graphix **B**
control **B**
sound **B-**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **B-**











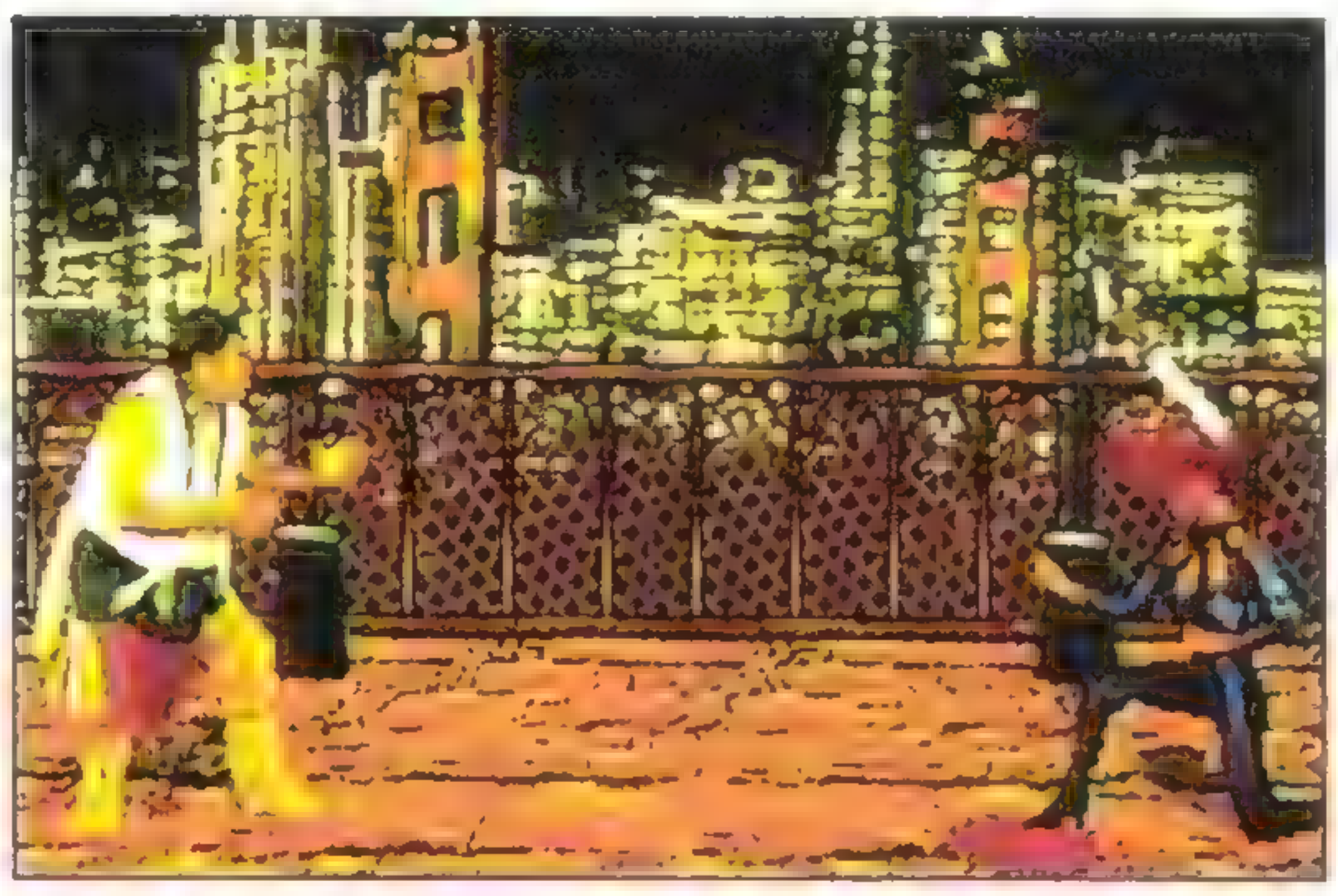
A few months back, a pleasantly warm and tingly feeling came over me when I read in a magazine that *B.C. Racers* was "3D racing at its finest" and "racing perfection." So, when the game came in for review, I was primed and ready to wet myself with joy. But upon playing a few rounds of Core Design's *B.C. Racers* for the Sega CD, there was no need to break out the Depends undergarments: it's a fun game, yes—but "racing perfection" it most certainly ain't.

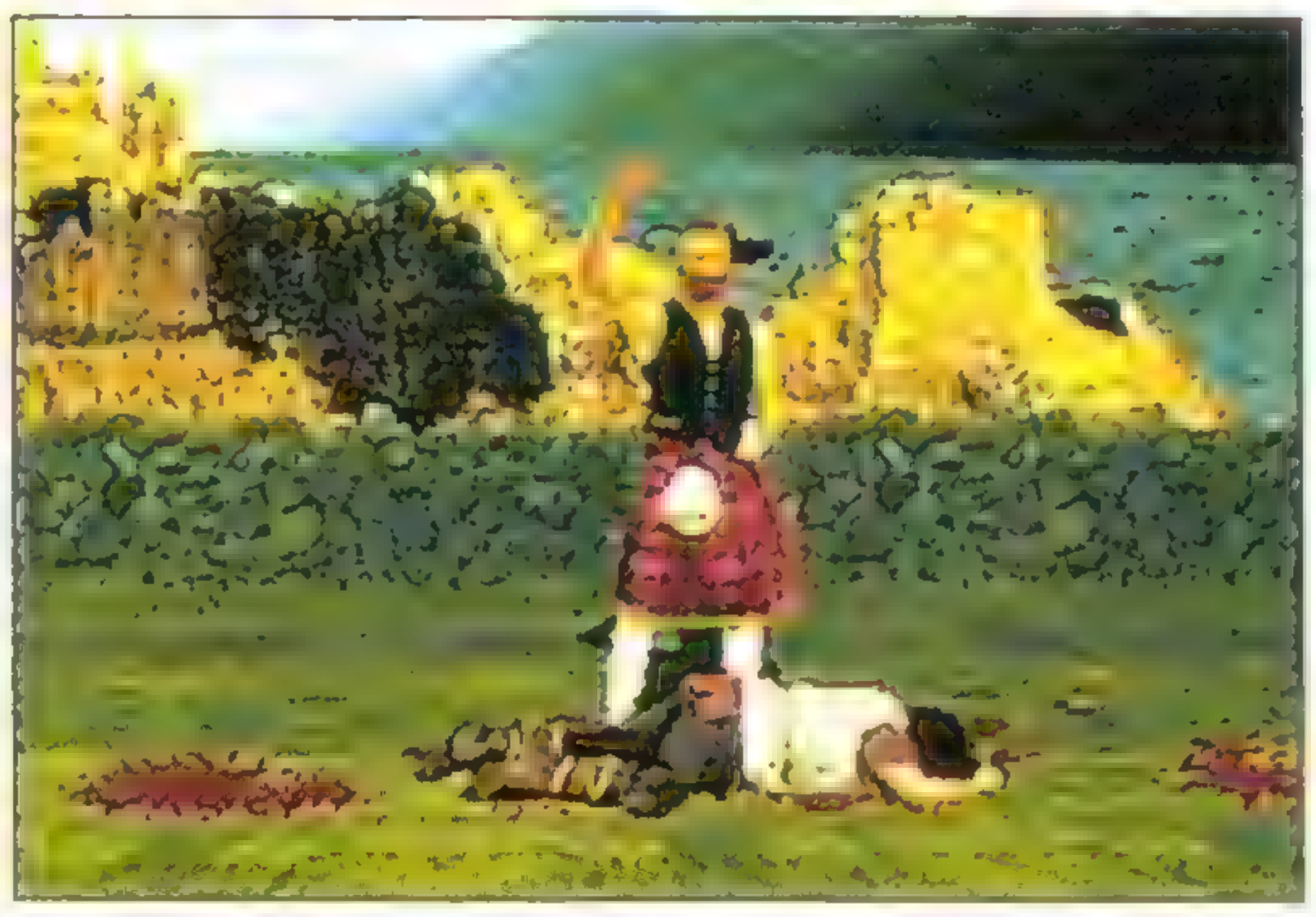
B.C. Racers can best be described as a combination of *Super Mario Kart*, *Road Rash* and *Chuck Rock*. Pick one of six prehistoric racing teams and steer your chosen duo through eight increasingly difficult tracks (a sandy desert, a lush tropical jungle, an icy plain, etc.). Unfortunately, unless you pick a team with a high energy level, chances are good that you'll get knocked out of the race after two or three crashes. During the race, put that big wooden club to good use and whack your opponents upside their stone-age heads—you can also throw punches at your fellow racers and also change views of the track. *B.C. Racers* offers three different *Virtua Racing*-style viewpoints, each one being higher than the last.

That's basically it. You can switch racers and change the difficulty level, but you're still circling the same eight tracks over and over. The Sega CD's scaling capabilities are quite impressive, but are nothing to lose your precious bodily fluids over. With a two-player mode, a handful more options or a few more tracks, this could've been a keeper; but in its present state, you'll play *B.C. Racers* once or twice and forget it in a couple of days. **—ZACH MESTON**

KASUMININJA

system **Jaguar**
manufacturer **Atari**
graphix **B+**
control **C-**
sound **B-**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **C**





Games like Kasumi Ninja will make Jaguar owners wonder why they ever blew their savings on the 64-bit super system. As the first fighting game for the Jaguar, *Kasumi Ninja* is attractive enough—on the outside, anyway—to sucker anyone into giving it a shot. The graphics are gorgeous, with big fighters, excellent digitization (the process of filming live actors and instead of computer-generated characters that's used in such games as *Way Of The Warrior* and *Mortal Kombat*) and detailed, colorful backgrounds. It's a pretty picture, to say the least—but that's where *Kasumi Ninja*'s good qualities end.

Kasumi Ninja's biggest downfall—the same thing that usually separates good fighting games from bad—is the control. Can you say a-w-f-u-l? Imagine not being able to execute a kick once you're in the air (you have to do it just as you jump, otherwise your fighter will jump up and do nothing, then land and get beaten to a pulp). Imagine seeing an opening for an uppercut, pressing the right button, and watching your fighter do nothing (except get his/her ass beat). Frustrating? You bet.

Another major shortcoming is that *Kasumi Ninja* only offers eight different opponents and one final boss. You can fight them in any order you wish (and you have to re-select your fighter after every match—how dumb is that?), then it's on to a best-of-five with Gyaku, the Evil Ninja Lord (ooh, scary). After that, it's game over, dude. You'd think that a fighting game on a 64-bit system would have at least as many characters as 16-bitters like *MK II* or *SSF II*. Not so. And, man, talk about lame characters! With stupid names like Habaki, Thundra, Pakawa and Angus, not to mention their wet blanket personalities, *Kasumi Ninja* features some of the most non-menacing characters ever in a fighting game.

Oh, did someone mention "blood?" If you're looking for blood, *Kasumi Ninja*'s got buckets (in addition to some cool finishing moves the game calls "Death Moves." Gee, how original.). The gore is plentiful and adjustable, but really, who cares? Contrary to all the controversy surrounding blood content, it hasn't ever been a key ingredient in any good fighting game, and it's certainly of no value here. Lots of gore and bad gameplay is either a sign of the Apocalypse, or a sign that Atari has no clue how to make a good fighting game. Take your pick.

Kasumi Ninja is just one more reason why having 64-bits and a gazillion colors means diddly when it comes to game quality. But Jaguar owners shouldn't despair over this temporary setback: *DOOM*, *Tempest 2000*, *Iron Soldier* and *Alien Vs. Predator* still kick major butt, and the chances are good that more great Jag games are on the way. **—JK**

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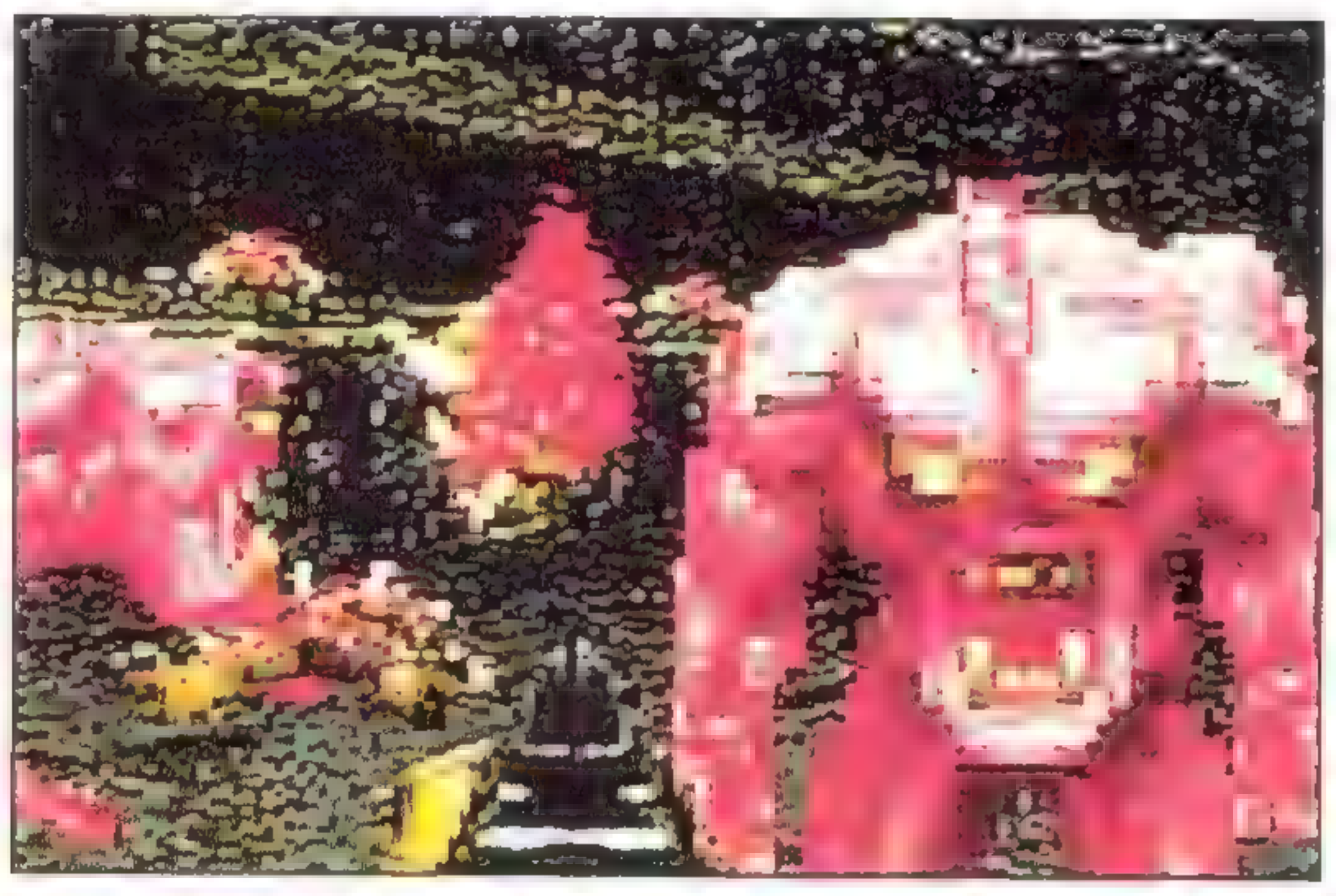
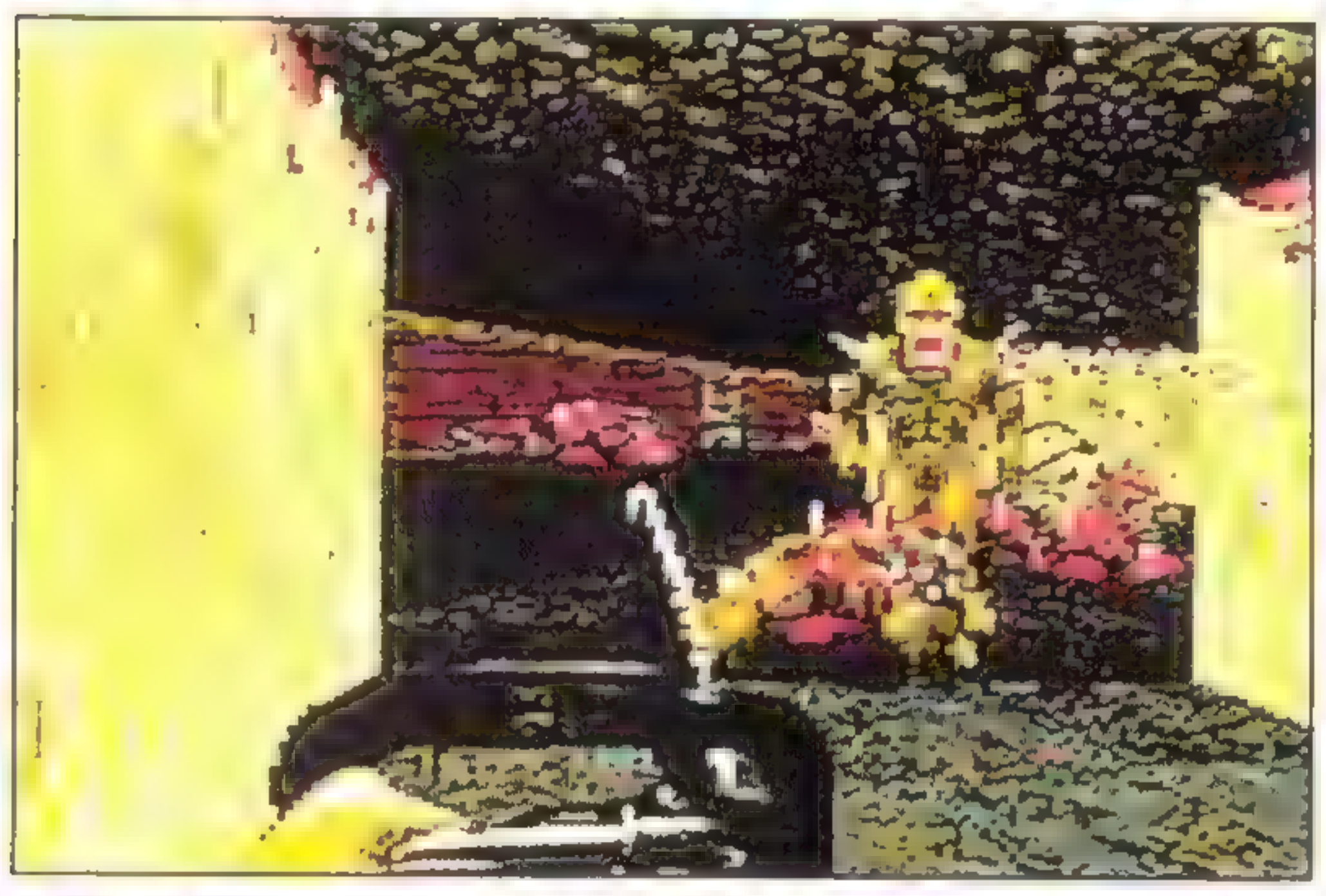
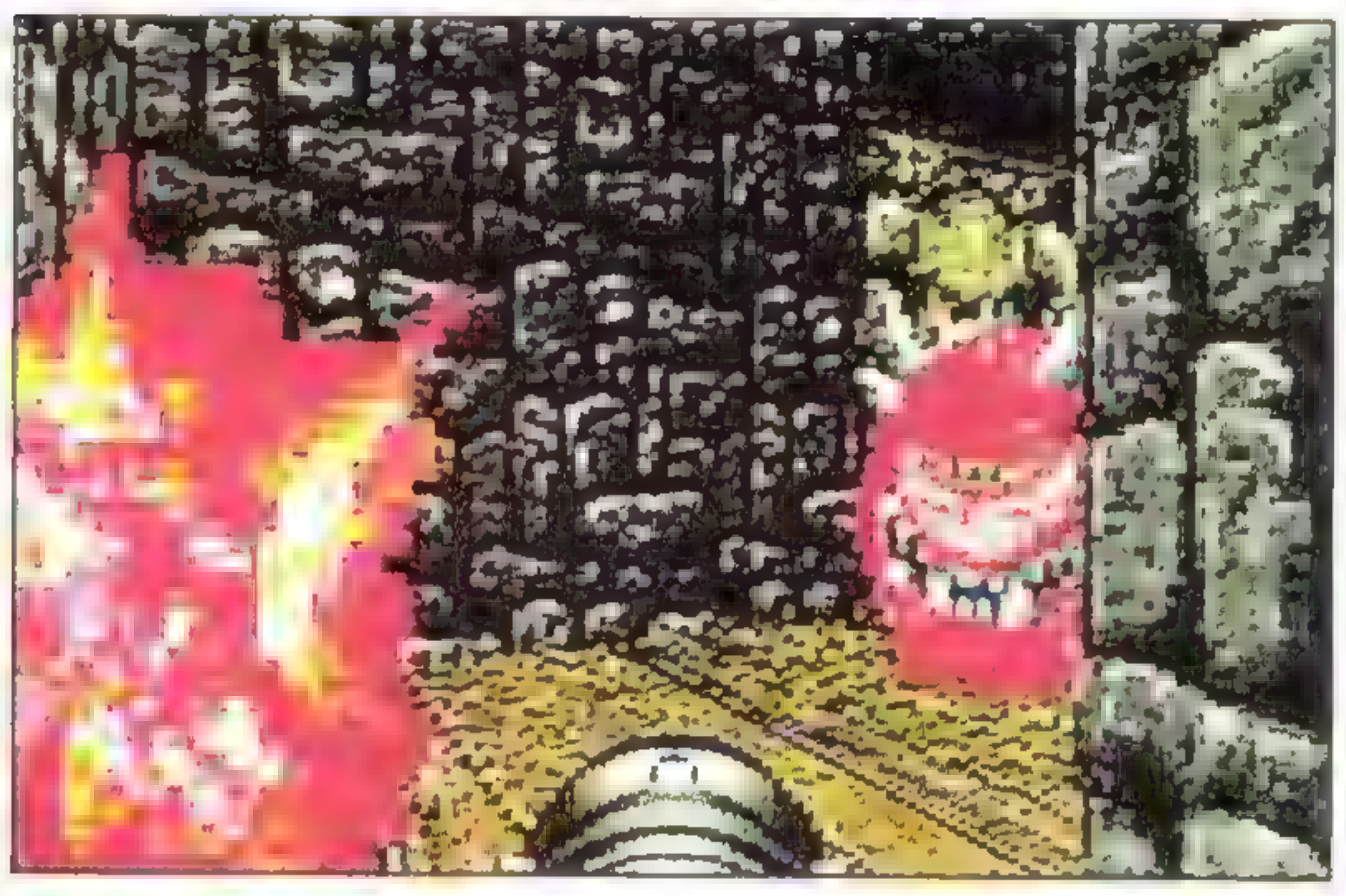
DOOM

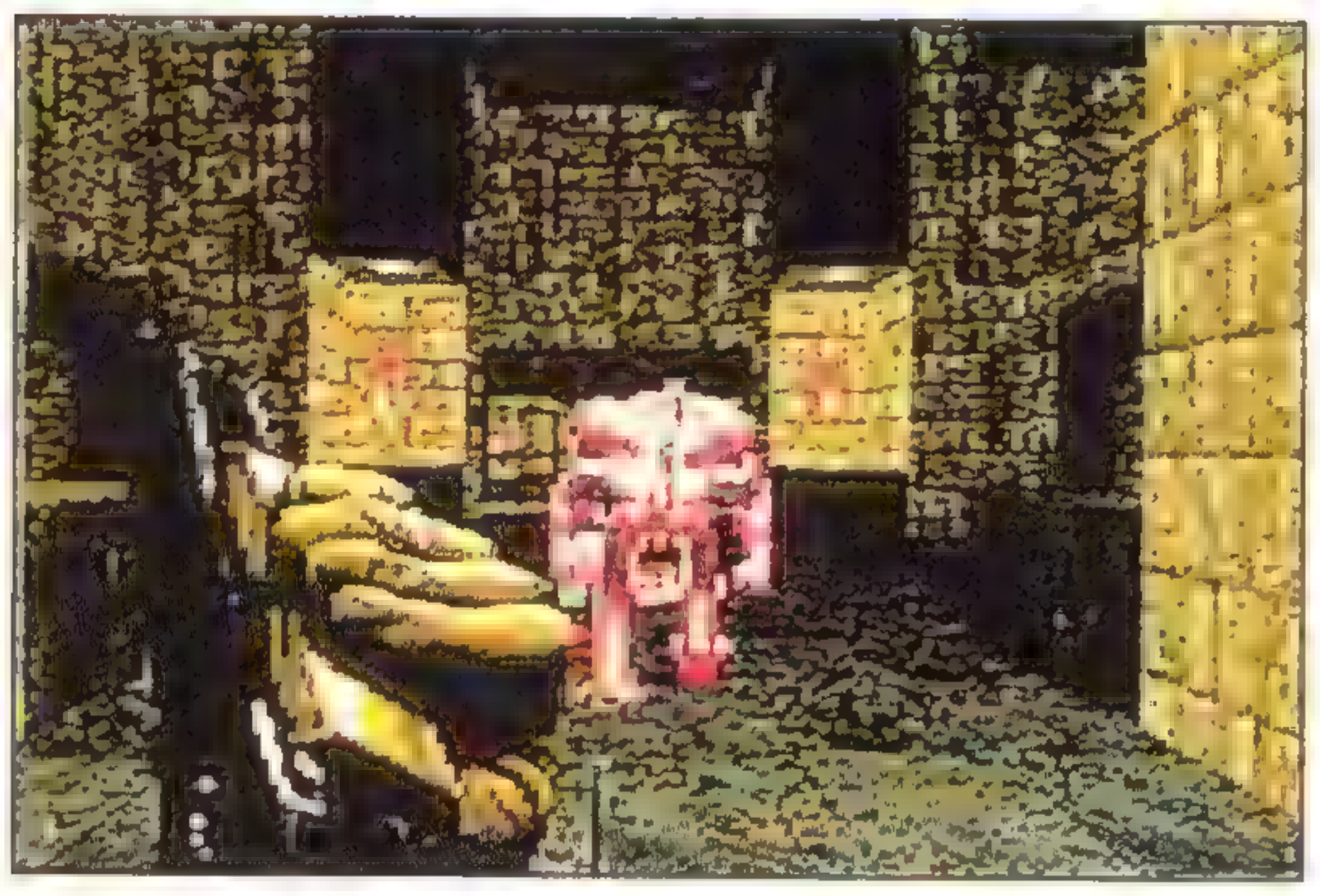
system **Jaguar**
manufacturer **Atari/id Software**
graphix **A**
control **A**
sound **A-**
password/save **Yes**
buy/rent **Buy**
overall **A**

PC gamers have called it the greatest game ever created. A technological breakthrough, not to mention the most riveting, exhilarating piece of gaming brilliance to ever grace the home computer. With such a reputation, it came as no surprise that people were skeptical about how the mighty *DOOM* would fare on a home gaming system. And, following the mediocre Sega 32X version, skepticism about the Jaguar version rose even higher. Well, Jaguar owners can now rest easy, as Atari (and id Software, original creators of *DOOM*) have not only done the PC version justice, but have also made a game that easily justifies the Jag's hefty $250 price tag.







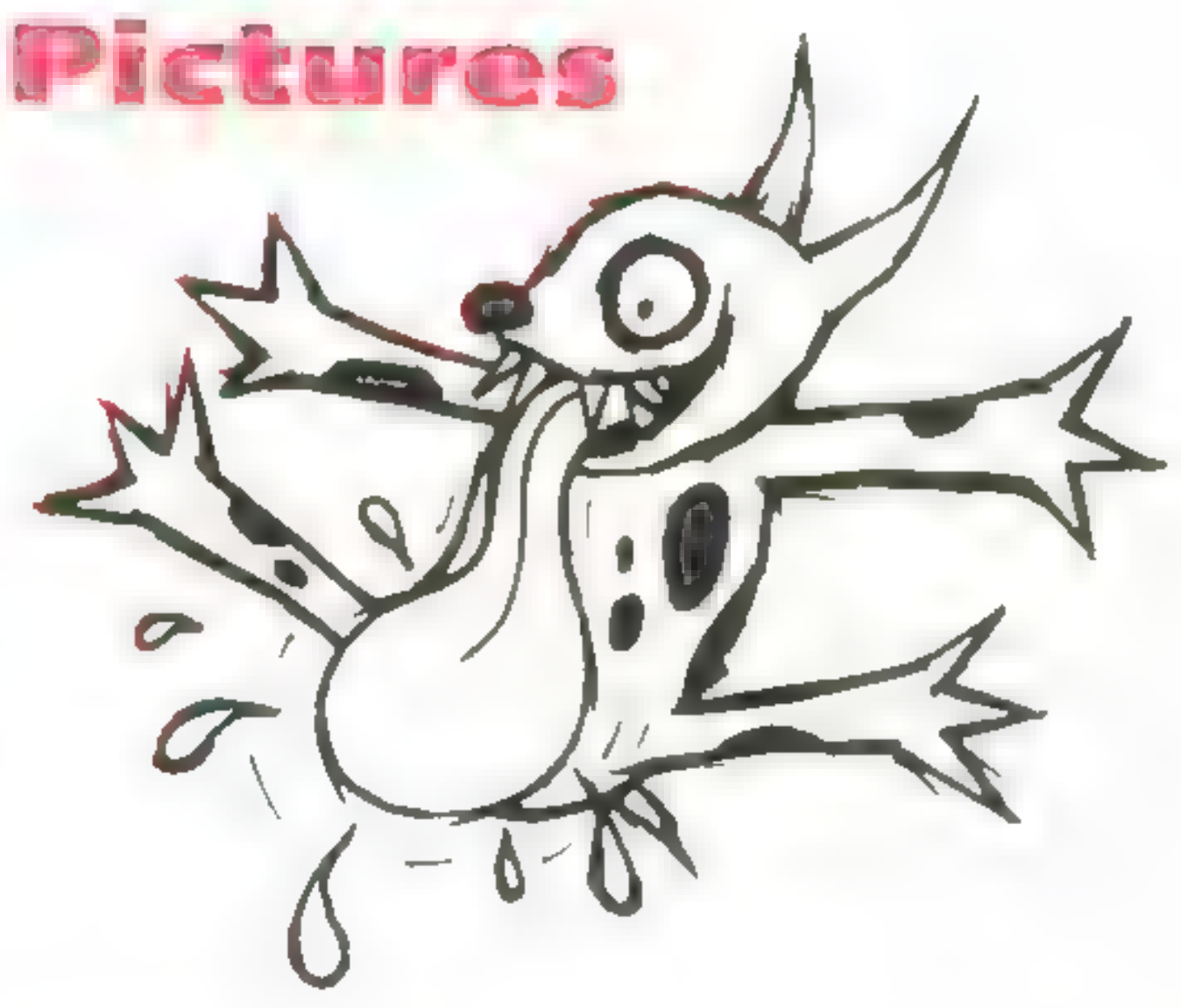


For those still unfamiliar with *DOOM*, here's the deal: you're the last marine alive on a moon base near Mars. It's just you and thousands of deadly creatures and monsters, from fireball-throwing Imps to flaming skulls that run you down. You'll encounter these spawns of hell as you search the base, ducking behind giant columns, walking down dark corridors and flipping switches that might unleash anything from health power-ups to a horde of Demons. With *DOOM*'s first person perspective (all you see of yourself is your current weapon), dizzying, 3-D layout and lightning-quick pace, this is the closest thing right now to virtual reality in the home.

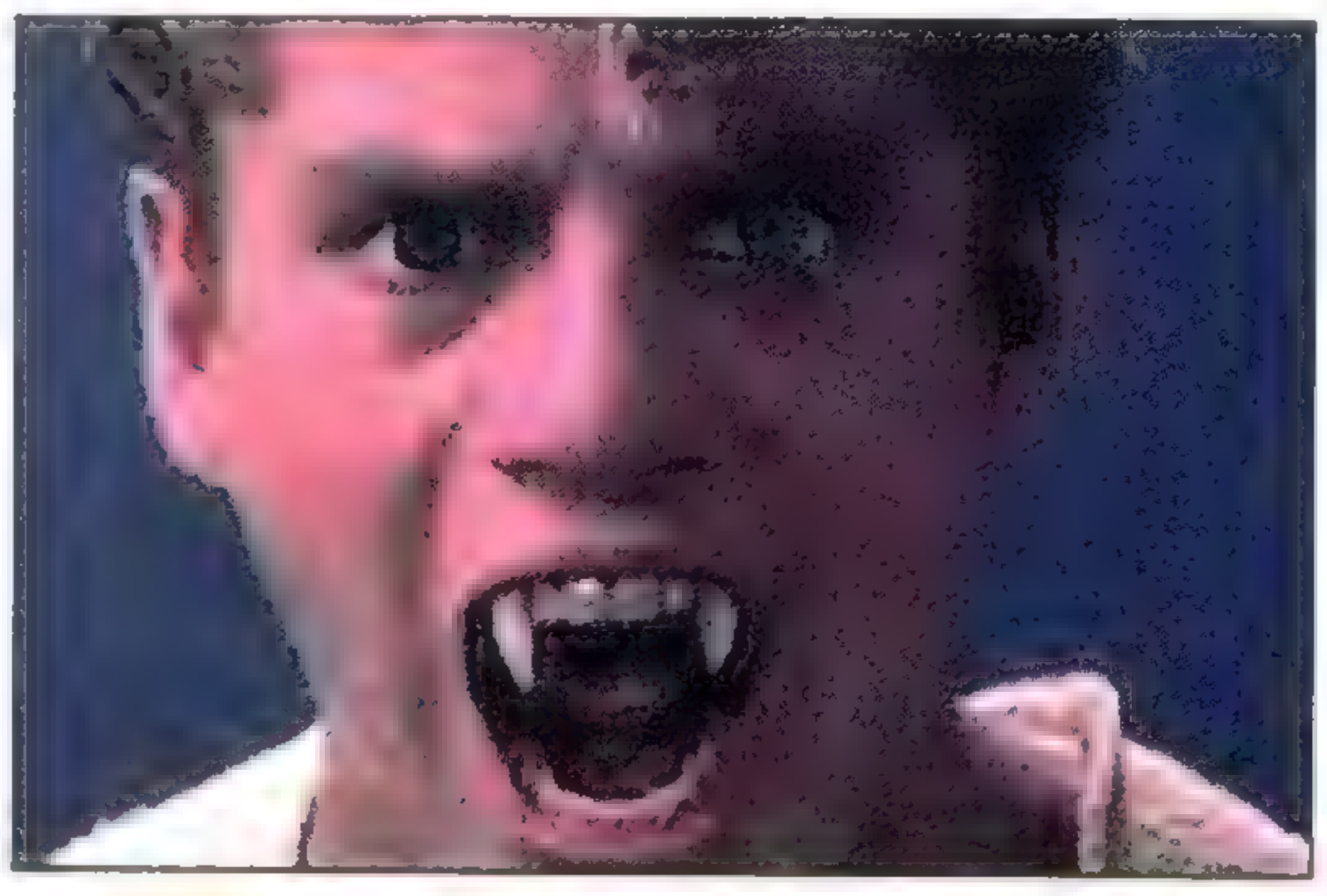
But *DOOM* isn't just a vicious fire-fight between you and a bunch of nasty enemies. *DOOM* is an all-out adventure: a game so engrossing and challenging that it crawls inside your head even when you switch it off. Play it in the dark and listen to the sick, gurgling sounds and you can pretty much count on the scariest, most heart-racing adrenaline-rush of your gaming life. With 24 levels, mazes that, at times, seem endless and puzzles that need solving, *DOOM* is the type of game that'll keep you occupied for weeks. And give you nightmares in the process.—**JK**

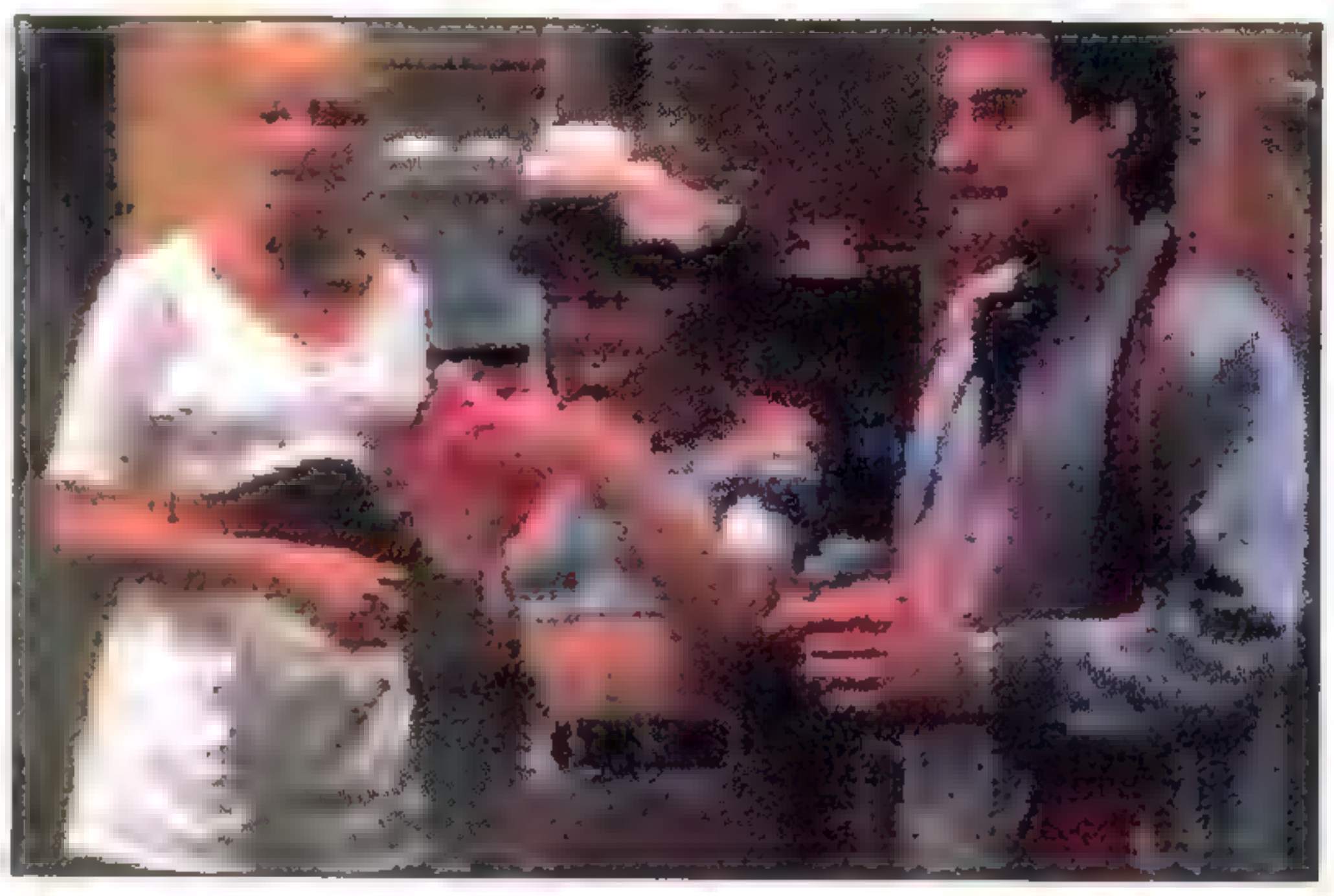
NIGHT TRAP

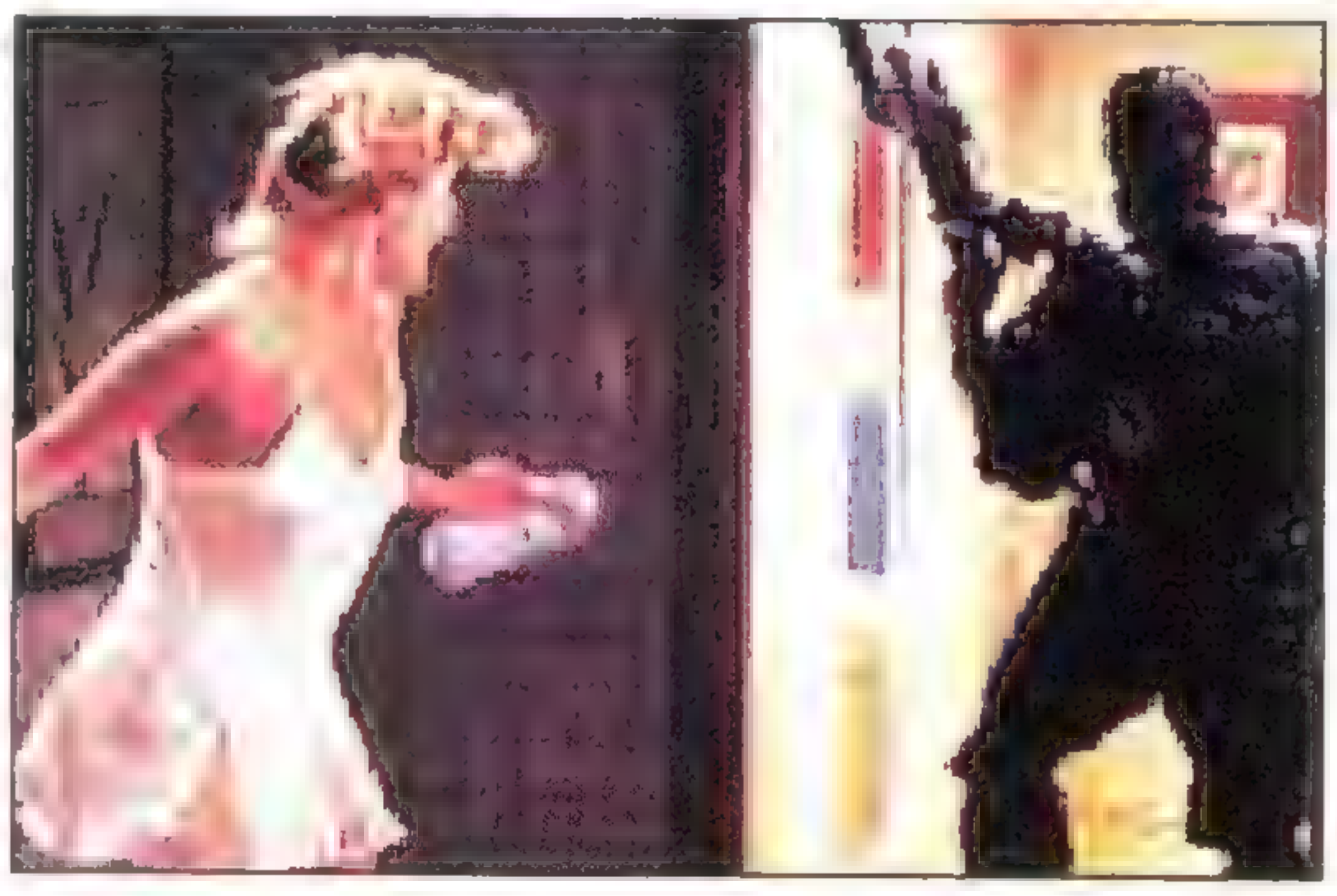
system **32x**
manufacturer **Digital Pictures**
graphix **A-**
control **A**
sound **B+**
password/save **No**
buy/rent **Rent**
overall **B+**



Recipe for success: make a clever full-motion video game that parodies B-movies, wait for stuffed political shirts to miss the jokes, then let them waste tax dollars arguing over the game's moral decency (or lack thereof). Hey, it worked for *Night Trap*. Thanks to those now-infamous Senate hearings on video game violence, Sega buckled under the perceived governmental pressure and Digital Pictures' innovative and mostly harmless disc was pulled from the shelves until a rating system could be put in place. Now, with an M-for-Mature rating displayed on the box like a badge of honor, the original game—no deleted scenes, no censored footage, every gameplay aspect preserved and labeled by some faceless organization representing truth, decency and the Senatorial way—is being re-released for Sega systems, and on the 32X, it's never looked better.

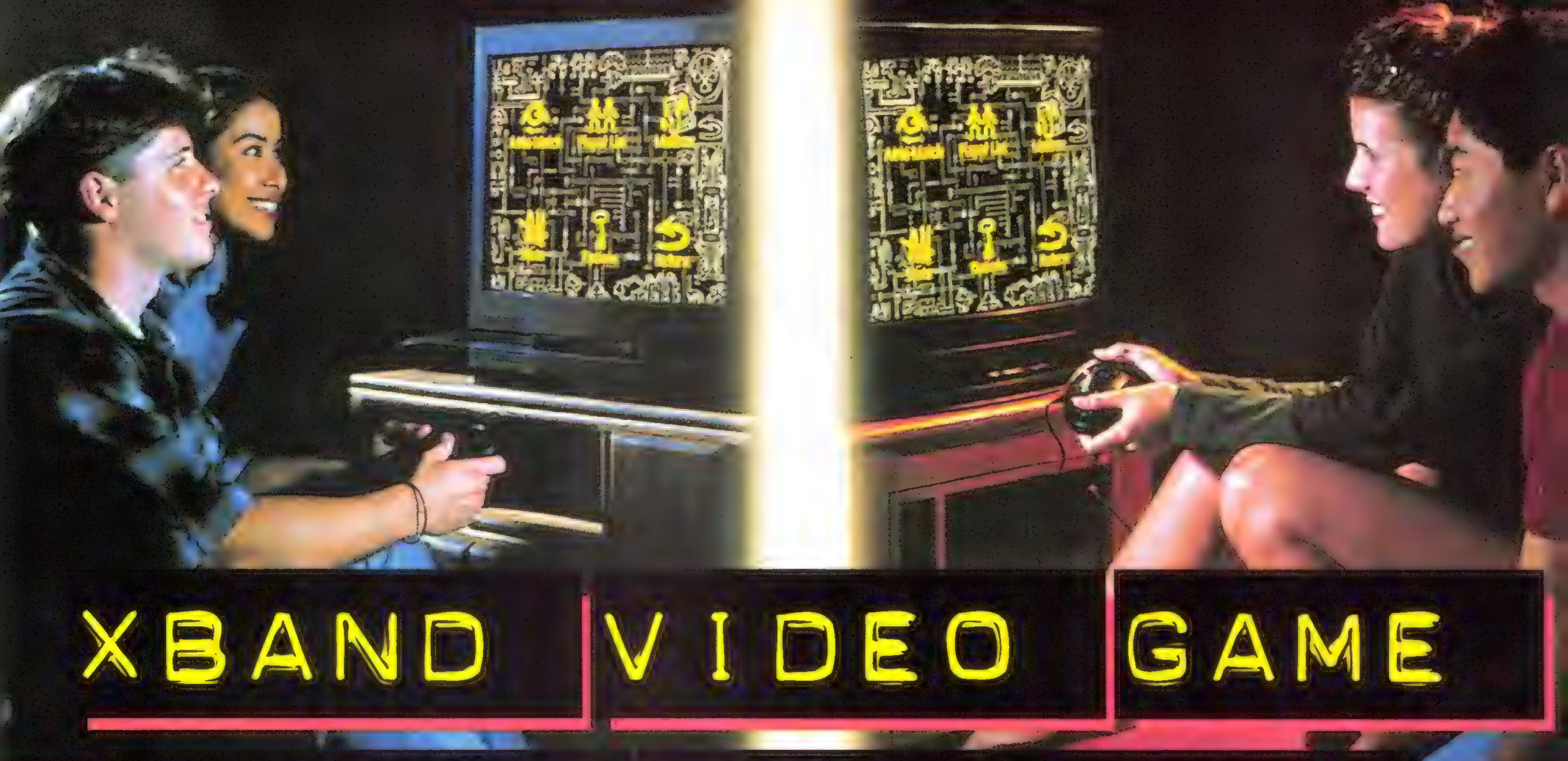






While there are actually a few changes, none are for the worse. The viewing window is massive in comparison to the original game, taking up nearly 2/3 of the screen, and the colors are much more vibrant. Still, I kind of expected even better-looking video from a 32-bit system. The original soundtrack hasn't changed much, if at all, though it's apparently been run through the same compression as the video, so it doesn't sound entirely CD-crystal. Also, some footage was replaced—the SCAT team introduction and the places where your commanding officer chews you out were reshot with the same actors but without a Sega three-button controller as the prop—but those weren't the scenes that got Lieberman's boxers in a bunch. Those parts of a game—including a girl in a skimpy nightie getting drilled in the neck with a giant metal hook and a corpse or two hanging upside down in the pantry, their blood draining into bottles—are still very much a part of the story. And even when compared to more recent interactive films, the cast's intentionally campy acting still holds up surprisingly well.

Other than the obvious graphical improvements the 32X offers and the use of the speedier InstaSwitch controller response, this is essentially still the same classic *Night Trap* Digital Pictures released a few years back. The new M rating might as well stand for Misinterpreted; those Senatorial dodos need a sense of humor. After all, the game's got one. **—DAN AMRICH**



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Basic Instinct

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By Eric Holma

Move over, *Virtua Fighter*! Step aside *Mortal Kombat*! *Primal Rage*, you're extinct! **Killer Instinct** has arrived and has already become an arcade **fighting game phenomenon**. Unfortunately, not everyone knows how to execute Chief Thunder's Flying Phoenix or play as Eyedol—and those novice gamers have become easy prey for those who have that killer instinct. But all that's about to change. With the official FLUX *Killer Instinct* Strategy Guide, every move, Humiliation, Fake-Out, Combo and **No Mercy** is right at your fingertips—and they're proven to work on *current KI* machines, thank you very much! So take this list, learn the moves and memorize the combos, and before long you'll be **inflicting some major damage** on all those who dare challenge you to a round of *Killer Instinct*. And always remember—show *no* mercy.

Game Basics

- Players fight to win two of three rounds, but unlike other fighting games, your health is not replenished between rounds! You have two bars of energy. When the first person loses their first bar, they fall, and Round One is over. If the other person loses their first bar, then Round Two is over. When someone loses their second bar, they lose, and the winner may perform a No Mercy (*KI*'s version of Fatalities) or a Humiliation (make the other person dance). If a person wins the first round without losing much of their energy, they've got a big advantage going into the next round.
- If your life bar runs out, don't give up—after you've been killed, you can still come back and fight. When your bar is down to zero, you'll stand slumped over like you're dizzy. When this happens, shake the joystick and pound on the buttons, and you might just wake up and be able to fight again! But be quick—you must "awaken" before your opponent hits you again or starts a No Mercy or Humiliation.
- When selecting your character, Left and Right scrolls through the different fighters available. Up and Down will scroll through the different colors for whichever character you are currently on. Up and Start will do a random select.
- After selecting your character but before the fight starts, holding both joysticks down and pressing both Start buttons will cause the computer to say "Combo Breaker!" What this does is allow you to break combos using any button. Usually you have to use a certain button to break a combo, depending on which button the opponent used to do the combo. This makes breaking much easier. More on combos and Combo Breakers later.
- Speed up the fights in Turbo Mode! Both players must hold Right & All Punches after selecting your fighters. You will hear a 'whoosh' instead of the normal 'Fight On' to let you know that it worked. You now have to perform combos even faster!

BACKGROUNDS

- There are many different backgrounds in the game, and in 2-player mode you have a choice. Each character has their own "home" background, and there are others owned by no one. To select a background, hold the joystick up or down (depending) when choosing your character and hit a button to select your character. Each combination gives you a different background. For instance, to play as T.J. Combo and fight on the Chicago Skyline background, scroll to Combo, hold the stick up and press Medium Kick. After one player chooses a stage, the other player can also choose the background music the same way. Here's the list of backgrounds:

Arizona (Down and Quick Punch)
Chief Thunder's background. You'll fight on a rope bridge that spans across a giant canyon and even sags when you walk on it.

Castle Interior
(Down and Medium Punch)
Riptor's background. You're inside a castle, lit by candles.

Lava Bridge (Down and Fierce Punch)
One of Eyedol's backgrounds. You'll fight on a metal bridge over a lava pit. Beat Eyedol and you can knock him into the lava.

Chicago Street
(Down and Quick Kick)
A dark street with junked cars in the background.

Chateau (Down and Medium Kick)
Sabrewulf's background. A nice little room with a fireplace, real fancy looking. Because of the stairs on the left, make sure you don't get caught in the corner!

Catwalk (Down and Fierce Kick)
Fulgore's background. A metal catwalk suspended in the air.

Ice Temple (Up and Quick Punch)
Glacius' background. A snow covered mountain, with what looks to be a temple in the background.

Infinite Room
(Up and Medium Punch)
Not exactly infinite, but still a pretty long room; you can keep running away from your opponent and not get caught in the corner.

Ice Statue (Up and Fierce Punch)
Similar to the Ice Temple stage, but with a big statue in the background. There is a small raised bridge in the middle.

Castle Roof (Up and Quick Kick)
Spinal's background. You're now on the roof of the castle. There is a trapdoor in the far corner. Instead of a No Mercy, you can charge your opponent and knock them off the roof; they'll fall off, through the drawbridge below and into the moat.

Chicago Skyline
(Up and Medium Kick)
Orchid's background. It's the roof of the background building from the Chicago Street area. Again, you can knock the opponent off the roof; this time, they fall onto the car from the Chicago Street.

Desert Roof
(Up and Fierce Kick or Down and Start)
Cinder's background. You're on the roof of a building isolated in the desert. You can knock your opponent off and they'll fall into a lava moat at the bottom.

Sky Stage (Both players press Down and Medium Kick)
Quick death! This is a small platform flying thought the sky. The cool thing is that you can knock your opponent off the platform during the fight! Three-second fights are not uncommon in this background!

Boxing Ring
Combo's background. You fight in a gym outside of a boxing ring. When the fight begins, you'll hear someone yell "Check this out!"

Tiger Head
Jago's background.Check out the giant golden tiger head on the wall.

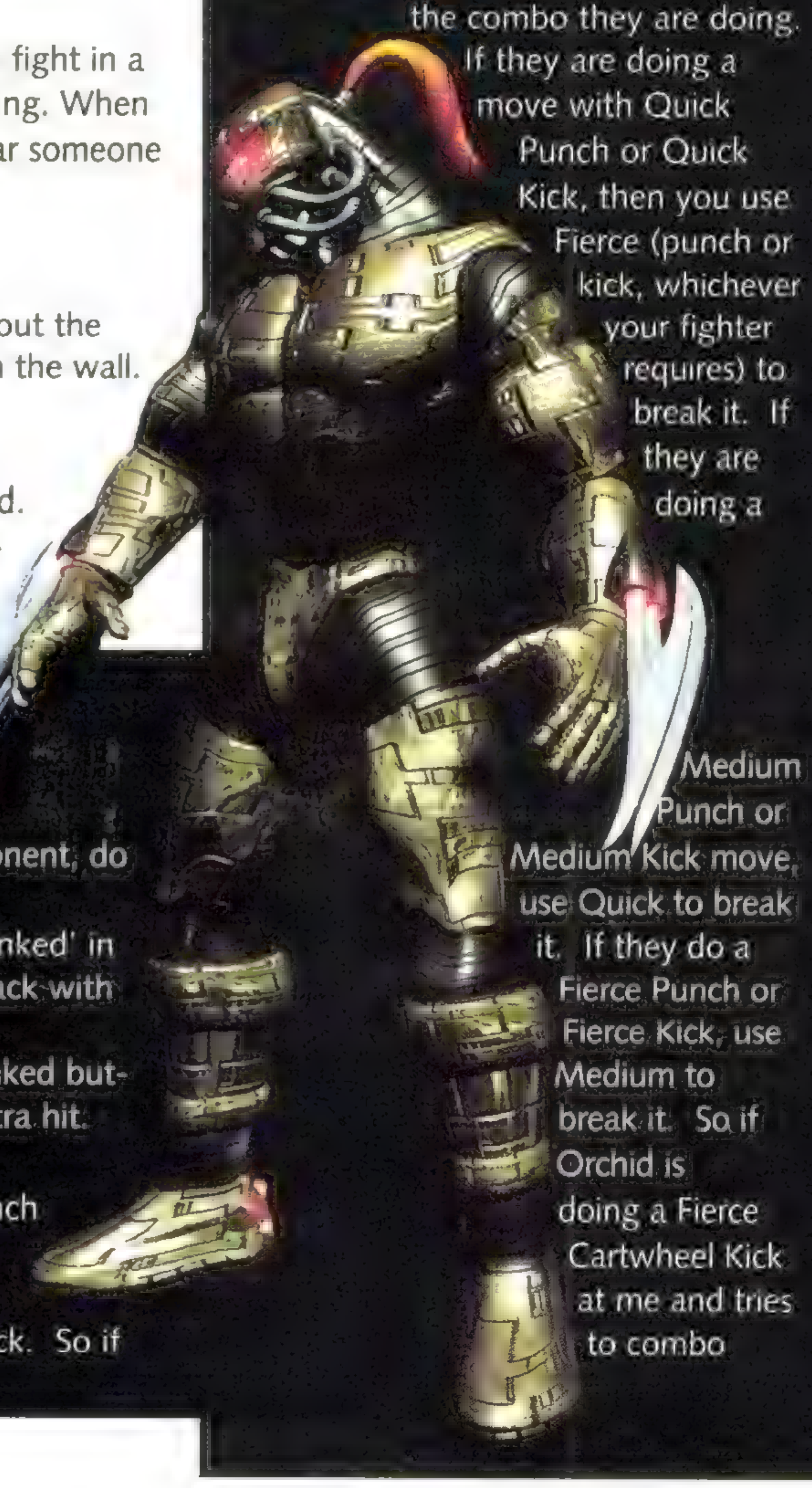
Auditorium
Eyedol's other background. Looks like a trashed auditorium.

FIGHTING BASICS

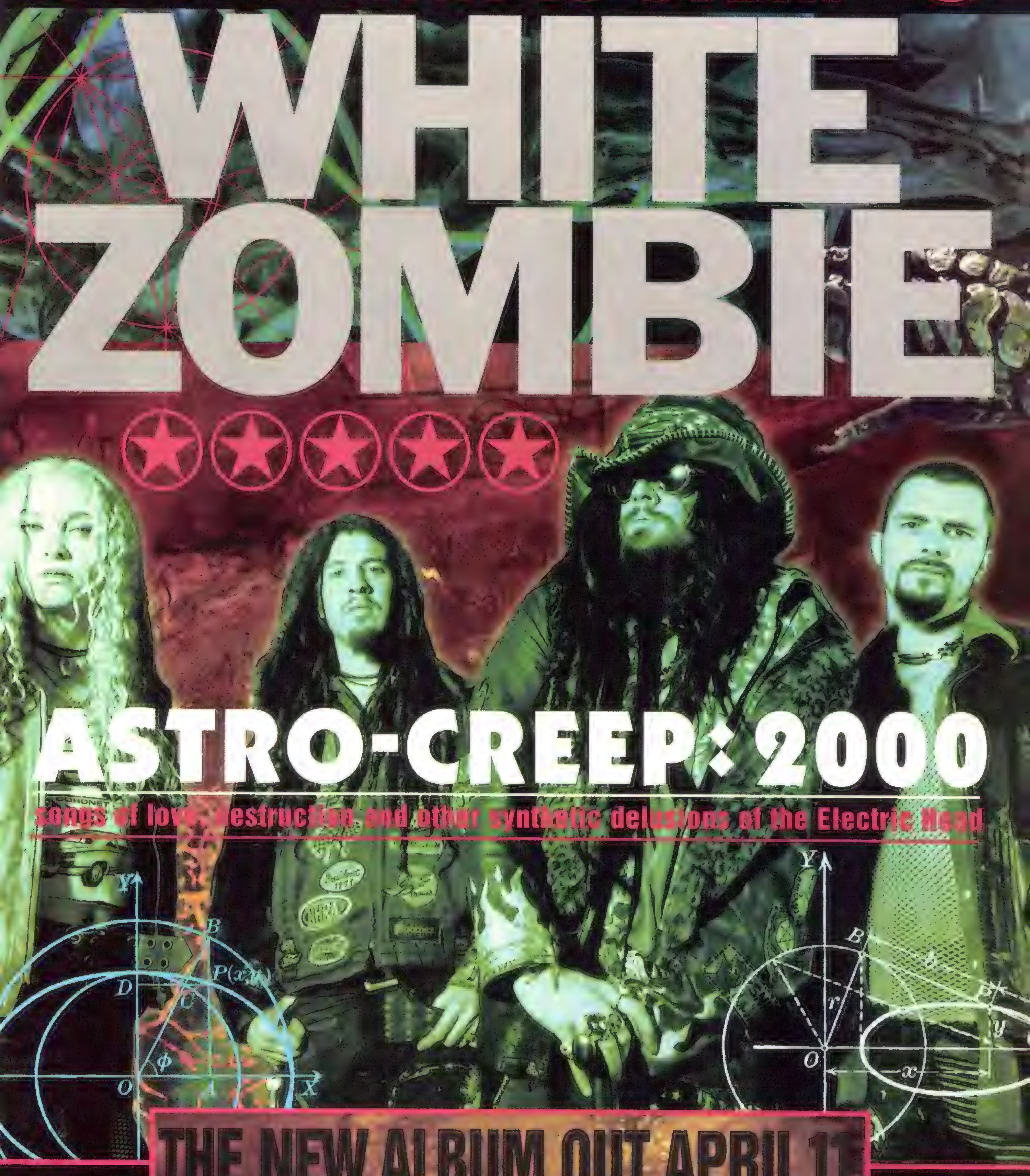
- To nail a crouching opponent, do a Back + Fierce Punch.
- The buttons on *KI* are 'linked' in a certain order. If you attack with one button and then hit the linked button, you will get a free extra hit. The button links are Quick Punch - Quick Kick, Medium Punch - Fierce Kick, and Fierce Punch - Medium Kick. So if you hit with a Quick Punch and then hit Quick Kick, you'll get an extra hit added, for a total of 3 hits!
- COMBOS! A combo is a series of hits and special moves that is unblockable once the first move hits. You must get at least 3 hits to qualify as a combo. These are essential if you want to master *Killer Instinct*.

TRIPLE COMBO (3 hits)
SUPER COMBO (4 hits)
HYPER COMBO (5 hits)
BRUTAL COMBO (6 hits)
MASTER COMBO (7 hits)
AWESOME COMBO (8 hits)
BLASTER COMBO (9 hits)
MONSTER COMBO (10 hits)
KING COMBO (11 hits)
KILLER COMBO (12 hits or more)

- There are two other types of combos, ULTIMATE and ULTRA. Both of these types can *only* be done when your opponent's life bar is flashing red. Ultimate Combos will automatically go into a No Mercy. Ultra Combos are very large, usually 20+ hit combos that the computer will perform automatically once started. To perform these combos, you just need to do a simple activator move during a combo, after at least two hits. For example, T.J. Combo's Ultra Combo activator is Charge Forward, then Back + Fierce Punch. A simple combo to do to use this in is Charge Back, Forward + Quick Kick, hold forward, two Medium Kicks, then Back + Fierce Punch. A good 20 hit Ultra Combo!
- What to do when someone is going medieval on your ass with a combo? Pull off a Combo Breaker! A combo breaker is done between hits in a combo, and it takes a little practice to get the timing right. Which button you use depends on what move in the combo they are doing. If they are doing a move with Quick Punch or Quick Kick, then you use Fierce (punch or kick, whichever your fighter requires) to break it. If they are doing a Medium Punch or Medium Kick move, use Quick to break it. If they do a Fierce Punch or Fierce Kick, use Medium to break it. So if Orchid is doing a Fierce Cartwheel Kick at me and tries to combo



THE WAIT IS OVER!



WHITE ZOMBIE

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WORLDWIDE REPRESENTATION: ANDY GOULD AND
WALTER O'BRIEN FOR CONCRETE MANAGEMENT

after that, and I am playing T.J. Combo, I will break using B, F, Medium Kick. When you do break a combo, the white line on your life bar will start flashing. You are now "Charged" and can do Shadow Moves and other things that will be explained later. Two characters can become Charged in other ways, Sabrewulf can do his Charge-Up Howl and Spinal can do his Shield Absorber to get the white line flashing.

- Tired of telegraphing that Running Haymaker? Does your opponent see that Electric Rush coming a mile away? Then fake him out! Some characters have various Fake Out moves that can be done, changing one move into another. A very popular one is with T.J. Combo, while doing the Running Haymaker you can go right into the Rolling Gut Punch! It looks like you're going to hit high with the Haymaker, then WHAM!, you hit low with the Gut Punch!

COMPLETE CHARACTER MOVES

F = Forward, **B** = Back, **U** = Up, **D** = Down
F/D = Diagonal Forward + Down
D/B = Diagonal Down + Back
ChF = Charge Forward
ChB = Charge Back

- Some moves require you to charge in a direction first, like Guile's Flash Kick or Sonic Boom in *Street Fighter II*.
- Some people find it easier to perform F, F/D, D, D/B moves by doing them as F, F/D, D instead. Use whichever is easiest for you.
- Remember, Shadow moves can only be down when you are "Charged" and the white line on your life bar is flashing!
- With most characters, after knocking your opponent into the air during a combo, you can hit them with a projectile or charging move. For example, after ending an Orchid combo with her Saber Spin, do a Laser-Ken with Quick Punch and it will hit the falling opponent!

TJ COMBO

Backhand:
ChB, F + Quick Punch
Spinning Backhand:
ChF, B + Quick Punch
Rolling Gut Punch:
ChB, F + Medium Punch
Running Haymaker:
ChB, F + Fierce Punch
Short Flying Knee:
ChB, F + Quick Kick
Vertical Flying Knee:
ChB, F + Medium Kick
Long Flying Knee:
ChB, F + Fierce Kick
Wind-Up Uppercut:
Charge Fierce Punch, release, wait, Fierce Punch
Shadow Running Haymaker:
Hold Fierce Punch, F, B, F, Release
Combo Breaker:
B, F + Kick
Ultra Combo Activator:
ChF, B + Fierce Punch

FAKE OUTS:

While doing the Running Haymaker:
Backhand:
B + Quick Punch
Rolling Gut Punch:
B + Medium Punch
Stop running:
B + Fierce Punch
While doing the Rolling Gut Punch:
Vertical Flying Knee:
B + Medium Kick
Easy Combo:
ChB, F, Medium Punch - ChF, B, Quick Punch
Hard Combo:
ChB, F, Fierce Kick - Medium Kick - ChF, B, Quick Punch - Medium Kick - ChB, F, Quick Punch - Fierce Punch - Fierce Kick
Humiliation: D, D, D, Quick Punch
No Mercy-Neck Breaker:
B, B, F, F, Medium Punch
(stand very close)
T.J. punches the guy in the stomach and LOUDLY snaps his neck!
No Mercy-Screen Smash:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Kick
(very close)
Combo delivers 2 punches that knock the guy onto the inside of the screen!

JAGO

Fireball: D, F/D, F, Punch
Yellow Ball:
Hold Quick Punch, B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Release
Dragon Punch: F, D, F, Punch
Flying Kick:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Kick
Fast Kick:
Hold Fierce Kick, F, F/D, D, D/B, Release
Sword Slice:

003000
86
PRESS START

004500
72
TRIPLE
3 HITS

F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Punch
Shadow Red Fireball:
Hold Fierce Punch, B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Release
Shadow Flying Kick: Hold Fierce Kick, F, F/D, D, D/B, Release
Combo Breaker: F, D, F, Punch
ULTRA Combo Activator:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Quick Kick
Easy Combo: Jump in, Fierce Kick - F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Punch - F, F/D, D, D/B, Quick Kick
Hard Combo: F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Kick - B, Medium Kick - F, F/D, D, D/B,
Fierce Punch: B, Medium Kick - F, D,

F, Fierce Punch
Humiliation: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Medium Kick
No Mercy-Slice N' Dice: B, F, F, Quick Punch (stand very close) Jago whips out his sword and slice his opponent up!
No Mercy-Car Cruncher: B, B, F, F, Medium Punch (stand away)

GLACIUS

Ice Arm:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Quick Punch

Shoulder Rush:
ChB, F, Punch
Iceball:
D, F/D, F, Punch
Melting Teleport:
D, F/D, F, Quick Kick
Melting Uppercut:
D, F/D, F, Medium or Fierce Kick
Shadow Iceball:
Hold Quick Punch, D, F/D, F, Release
Shadow Many Iceballs: Hold Fierce Punch, D, F/D, F, Release
Shadow Uppercut:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Punch
Combo Breaker:
B, F, Punch
ULTRA Combo Activator:
ChB, F, Fierce Punch

FAKE OUTS:

While doing the Melting Teleport:
Ice Arm:F, F/D, D, D/B, Quick Punch
Shoulder Rush: F + Punch
Iceball: D, F/D, F, Punch
Melting Teleport: D, D/F, F, Quick Kick
Easy Combo: B, Fierce Punch - F, Fierce Punch - B, Fierce Punch
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Punch - B, Medium Punch - D, F, Fierce Punch
Humiliation:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Medium Kick
No Mercy-Finger Freeze:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Medium Punch (stand about 2 people away) Glacius extends his finger through the opponent, freezing them solid!
No Mercy-Blob:F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Medium Kick (stand about 1 person-length away) Glacius turns into a blob which engulfs the opponent. You can see the opponent struggling to escape!
No Mercy-Melting Pool: B, B, B, Fierce Kick (stand at least 1 person-length away) Glacius melts down into a pool under the opponent—and melts them, too!

SPINAL

Shield Absorber: B+ Quick Punch (each time you absorb a hit it gives you 1 skull; don't go over 7)
Sword Slice: ChB, F, Medium Punch or ChF, B, Medium Punch
Shield Rush: F, F, Punch
Slide: D + Fierce Kick
Teleport Front: D, D, Punch
Teleport Back: D, D, Kick

SPINAL
COMBO

Air Teleport Front: Hold Quick Punch, jump, D, D, Release
Air Teleport Back: Hold Quick Kick, jump, D, D, Release
Morph: D, D, D, Any Button (while in a combo, morphs you into your opponent and does a combo, which one depends on which button you press)
Shadow Fire Skull: D, F/D, F, Punch (must have circling skulls)
Shadow Red Skull: Hold Quick Punch, D, F/D, F, Release (must have 3 or more circling skulls)
Shadow Slice:
ChB, F, Medium Punch
Combo Breaker: F, F, Punch
ULTRA Combo Activator:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Punch
Easy Combo: F, F, Quick Punch - Fierce Punch - F, F, Fierce Punch
Hard Combo: B, F, Medium Punch - F, F, Quick Punch - B, Fierce Punch - F, F, Fierce Punch
Humiliation:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Punch
No Mercy-Burial:
B, B, B, Medium Punch (stand anywhere) Spinal raises his hand, and second skeleton comes out of the ground and pulls the opponent into the ground!
No Mercy-Shield Stab: B, F, F, Quick Kick (stand close) Spinal does 2 sword slices, then a large spike grows out of his shield and he stabs the opponent three times!

ORCHID

Flip Kick: B + Fierce Kick
Cartwheel Kick: ChB, F, Kick
Laser-Ken: D, F/D, F, Punch
Tiger Rush: ChB, F, Punch
Spinning Blade:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Punch
Propeller Blade: F, F/D, D, D/B, Medium or Quick Punch

Shadow Tiger Rush: Hold Fierce Punch, B, F, Release
Shadow Propeller: F, F/D, D, D/B, Medium Punch
Combo Breaker: B, F, Kick
ULTRA Combo Activator: ChB, F, Medium Punch
Easy Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Kick - ChB, F, Fierce Kick
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Kick - B, Quick Punch - F, Fierce Kick - B, Quick Punch - F, Fierce Kick - B, Quick Punch - F, Medium Kick
Humiliation: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Fierce Punch
No Mercy-Frog: D, F, B, Quick Kick (stand close) Orchid turns the opponent into a frog. Press Fierce Kick to stomp on the frog and squish it. Or hit Up and Fierce Punch repeatedly to free up Orchid and do whatever you want. Try doing her ULTRA Combo Activator!
No Mercy-Flasher: B, B, F, F, Quick Punch (stand close) Orchid unzips her top and exposes herself to the opponent! Male characters will be so dazzled by the sight that they fall over. Do it to another Orchid and she stamps her foot in jealousy!

CHIEF THUNDER

Flying Phoenix: D, F/D, F, Kick
Spinning Chop: ChB, F, Punch
Flying Headbutt: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Punch
Reverse Headbutt: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Fierce Punch (while in the air)
Shadow Headbutt: Hold Fierce Punch, F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Release

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89
THUNDER

Combo Breaker: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Punch
ULTRA Combo Activator: B, F, Quick Punch
Easy Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Punch - B, F, Quick Punch
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Punch - B, Fierce Kick - F, Fierce Kick - D, B, Medium Punch
No Mercy-Indian Pain Dance: B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Punch (stand about two people-lengths away) Thunder starts a rain dance and causes a bolt of lightning to come down and fry the opponent!
No Mercy-Uppercut: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Fierce Kick (stand close) Chief Thunder delivers a powerful uppercut with his hatchet! This one has different effects, depending on the opponent. For example, Glacius turns into a pile of ice cubes, and Sabrewulf turns into a can of dog food!

FULGORE

1 Lightning Bolt: B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Punch
2 Lightning Bolts: B, B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Quick Punch
3 Lightning Bolts: F, B, B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Quick Punch
Dragon Punch: F, D, F, Punch
Lightning Rush: ChB, F, Kick
Missile Reflection: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Punch
Optic Laser: F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Kick
Teleport Near: B, D, B, Punch
Teleport Far: B, D, B, Kick
Shadow Lightning Rush: Hold Fierce Kick, B, F, Release

Combo Breaker: F, D, F, Punch
ULTRA Combo Activator: F, D, F, Quick Punch
Easy Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Kick - Quick Kick - Quick Kick - Quick Punch
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Fierce Kick - B, Fierce Kick - F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Kick - B, Quick Punch - F, D, F, Fierce Punch
Humiliation: B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Medium Kick
No Mercy-Laser Beam: F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Punch (stand about two people away) Fulgore shoots a laser beam from his eyes and dissects the opponent!
No Mercy-Turret Gun: B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Fierce Kick (stand about two people away) Fulgore's head sinks into his body, replaced by a turret gun which then blows the opponent away!

CINDER

Body Torpedo: ChB, F Punch (you can do this in the air! Quick and Medium give you an angled flight!)
Dragon Punch Kick: F, D, F, Kick
Flamethrower: F, F, Kick or ChB, F, Kick
Flaming Palm: B, B, Quick Punch
Flame Outline: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Medium Punch (pass through projectiles!)
Invisible: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Fierce Punch
Shadow Body Torpedo: Hold Medium Punch, F, F, Release
Shadow Teleport: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Quick Punch
Combo Breaker: F, D, F, Kick
ULTRA Combo Activator: F, F, Fierce Punch
Easy Combo: ChB, F, Medium Punch - B, Fierce Kick - B, B, Quick Punch
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Medium Punch - B, Quick Punch - F, F, Quick Punch - D, Medium Kick - F, D, F, Medium Kick
Humiliation: B, B, B, Fierce Kick
No Mercy-Meltdown:

B, B, B, Medium Punch (stand about 1 person-length away) Cinder melts the ground under the opponent and melts them too!

No Mercy-Finger Melt:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Quick Kick (stand about 1 person-length away) Cinder shoots a flame out if his finger, melting the opponent!

SABREWULF

Charge-Up Howl:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Fierce Kick
Fire Bat: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Punch
Spinning Claw: ChB, F, Punch
Somersault Slash: ChB, F, Quick Kick
Uppercut Slash: ChB, F, Medium Kick
Leaping Slash: ChB, F, Fierce Kick
Lunging Rush: F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Kick
Combo Breaker: B, F, Kick

ULTRA Combo Activator:
ChF, B, Quick Kick

FAKE OUTS:

While doing the Uppercut Slash:
Somersault Slash: B + Quick Kick
Leaping Slash: B + Fierce Kick
Easy Combo: ChB, F, Medium Kick - B, Medium Kick
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Quick Kick - B, Fierce Punch - F, Medium Punch - B, Medium Punch - F, Fierce Kick
Humiliation: F, F, Quick Punch
No Mercy-Claw Stab:
B, B, B, Medium Kick (stand about 2 people-lengths away) Sabrewulf extends one claw and stabs the opponent in the gut!
No Mercy-Screen Smash:
B, B, F, Medium Punch (stand close) Same as T.J. Combo's—he nails the guy into the inside of the screen!

RIPTOR

Rush
ChB, F, Punch
Fireball: F, F,/D, D, D/B, B, Punch (can be done in the air!)
Flame: F, F/D, D, D/B, Punch
Leaping Claw Kick: ChB, F, Kick
Tail Attack: F, F/D, D, D/B, Kick
Leap Attack:
B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Quick Kick
Uppercut:
F, F/D, D, D/B, Quick Punch
Shadow Fireball: Hold Medium Punch, F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Release
Combo Breaker: B, F, Kick
ULTRA Combo Activator:
B, F, Quick Kick

FAKE OUTS:

While doing the Rush:
Flame: B + Fierce Punch
Leaping Claw Kick: B + Medium Kick
While doing the Leaping Claw Kick:
Fireball:
F, F/D, D, D/B, B, Fierce Punch
Easy Combo:
ChB, F, Medium Kick - Fierce Punch - Fierce Punch - B, F, Quick Kick
Hard Combo: ChB, F, Quick Kick - B, Quick Punch - Quick Kick - F, Quick Kick - B, Quick Punch - F, Fierce Kick
No Mercy-Lunch: B, D/B, D, F/D, F, Medium Punch (stand about 1 person length away) Riptor eats the opponent and then relives himself of gas.
No Mercy-Acid: B, B, B, Medium Kick (stand about 2 people-lengths away) Riptor spits acid at the opponent which sizzles them away!
No Mercy-Tail: F, F, B, Fierce Kick (stand about 2 people away) Riptor nails the opponent with his tail!

EYEDOL

How to play as Eyedol! Pick Riptor. Hold Left & Quick Punch, Medium Punch and Quick Kick. When the 'Vs.' screen comes up, switch to Right & Medium Punch, Fierce Punch, and Fierce Kick. You will hear "Eyedol" to let you know that it worked.
NOTE: There is a new version of *KI* out in which the Eyedol code supposedly doesn't work. If you can't get this to work on a specific *KI* machine, this *may* be the reason.

Headbutt Rush:B, F, Quick Punch
Club Hit: B, F, Medium Punch
Home Run Hit: B, F, Fierce Punch
Jump Forward/Hit:B, F, Quick Kick
Jump Up/Hit: B, F, Medium Kick
Jump Back/Hit: B, F, Fierce Kick
Foot Stomp: B, Medium Punch (Does not give energy, but see below)
Fireball:
D, F/D, F, Punch (Use Fierce after doing Foot Stomp to get 3 Fireballs!)
Easy combo: D/B, Quick Punch - F, Quick Punch - B, Medium Kick - F, Fierce Punch

Combo Breaker: B, F, Punch

OTHER COOL THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT KILLER INSTINCT!

These may or may not work, depending on the version of your local machine, since Midway is still updating the program!

- **Orchid's Floating Pose**
Do Orchid's Frog No Mercy. After the frog's 3rd croak, hold Up on the joystick. Orchid will jump and go into her victory stance in midair!

- **Orchid's Frog Thrashing**
Do Orchid's Frog No Mercy. After the frog's 3rd croak, hold Up and repeatedly press Punch. You can now control Orchid again. Try doing her ULTRA activator (B, F, Medium Punch)!

- **Spinal's Infinite Skulls**
Absorb one skull. Hold down the Medium Punch button. Do the motion to throw a skull. Hit the Quick Punch button as you release the Medium Punch button. Spinal will toss 2 skulls. Now you won't see any more skulls circling, but you now have unlimited skulls, and they resemble fireballs more than skulls. You can throw 2 again by doing the same thing. But be careful! You are at your limit on skulls, and if you absorb any more projectiles, you will pop!

- **Mini Fulgore**
Play as Fulgore on one of the rooftop stages. Get the opponent into a corner and try this combo: ChB, F, Fierce Kick - Medium Kick - B, D, B, Quick Kick. This will teleport you to the other side of your opponent, but you will be half your normal size! To shrink your opponent, try using a Fierce Kick instead of that last Quick Kick.

Special thanks to Brian Smolik, Dr. Daytona, Brian MacDonald, Mark 'MIZ' F. and all the non-turtles at Dream Machine, Downtown Crossing, Boston, MA!

codes of Dishonor

Compiled by Dan amrich

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SECRET PLAYERS

CHOW CHOW
ENTER A, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER M, PRESS START & A
ENTER X, PRESS Y & START (C FOR GENESIS)

WEASEL
ENTER R, PRESS START & B
ENTER A, PRESS START & A
ENTER Y, PRESS ANY BUTTON

BRUTAH
ENTER L, PRESS START & A
ENTER G, PRESS START & B
ENTER N, PRESS ANY BUTTON

KABUKI
ENTER D, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER A, PRESS START & B
ENTER N, PRESS START & A

FACIME
ENTER X, PRESS START & B
ENTER Y, PRESS START & B
ENTER Z, PRESS START & A

AIR DOG
ENTER A, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER I, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER R, PRESS START & B

KID SILK
ENTER K, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER S, PRESS START & B
ENTER K, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

SCOOTER PIE
ENTER H, PRESS START & A
ENTER T, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER P, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

MOOSEKAT
ENTER M, PRESS START & B
ENTER P, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER F, PRESS ANY BUTTON

MOON
ENTER J, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER A, PRESS START & A
ENTER Y, PRESS START & B

KIRBY
ENTER C, PRESS START & B
ENTER K, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER SPACE, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

SNAKE
ENTER G, PRESS START & A
ENTER O, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER F, PRESS START & B

FALCUS
ENTER J, PRESS START & A
ENTER F, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER SPACE, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

MUSKETT
ENTER M, PRESS START & B
ENTER C, PRESS START & B
ENTER M, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

HILL
ENTER N, PRESS START & A
ENTER D, PRESS START & B
ENTER H, PRESS START & A

MARK TURMELL (Midway)
ENTER M, PRESS START & A
ENTER J, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER T, PRESS START & A

JAMIE RIVETT (Midway)
ENTER R, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER J, PRESS START & A
ENTER R, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

SAL DIVITA (Midway)
ENTER S, PRESS START & A
ENTER A, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER L, PRESS ANY BUTTON

SHAWN LIPTAK (Midway)
ENTER S, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER L, PRESS START & B
ENTER SPACE, PRESS START & B

TONY GOSKIE (Midway)
ENTER T, PRESS START & B
ENTER W, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER G,. PRESS START & A

JOHN CARLTON (Midway)
ENTER J, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER M, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER C, PRESS START & B

LARRY BIRD
ENTER B, PRESS START & A
ENTER R, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER D, PRESS START & A

BLAZE (female)
ENTER B, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER L, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER Z, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

BENNY, Chicago Bulls mascot
ENTER B, PRESS START & B
ENTER N, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER Y, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

HUGO, Charlotte Hornets mascot
ENTER H, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER G, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENGER O, PRESS START & A

CRUNCH, Minnesota Timberwolves mascot
ENTER C, PRESS START & A
ENTER R, PRESS START & B
ENTER N, PRESS ANY BUTTON

SUNS GORILLA, Pheonix Suns mascot
ENTER G, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER O, PRESS START & B
ENTER R, PRESS START & B

BILL CLINTON
ENTER C, PRESS START & A
ENTER I, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER C, PRESS START & B

HILLARY CLINTON
ENTER H, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER C, PRESS START & B
ENTER SPACE, PRESS ANY BUTTON

PRINCE CHARLES
ENTER R, PRESS START & B
ENTER O, PRESS START & A
ENTER Y, PRESS ANY BUTTON

HEAVY D.
ENTER H, PRESS START & A
ENTER V, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER Y, PRESS START & B

DJ JAZZY JEFF
ENTER J, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER A, PRESS STπART & A
ENTER Z, PRESS START & A

FRESH PRINCE
ENTER W, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER I, PRESS START & B
ENTER L, PRESS ANY BUTTON

FRANK THOMAS
ENTER S, PRESS START & B
ENTER O, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER X, PRESS START & A

RANDALL CUNNINGHAM
ENTER P, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER H, PRESS START & A
ENTER I, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

MIKE D (Beastie Boys)
ENTER M, PRESS START & Y (C FOR

heat codes cheat codes cheat codes cheat codes cheat code cheatcodes cheatcodes cheatcodes cheat-

GENESIS)
ENTER K, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER D, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)

ADROCK (Beastie Boys)
ENTER A, PRESS ANY BUTTON
ENTER D, PRESS START & Y (C FOR GENESIS)
ENTER R, PRESS START & B

MCA (Beastie Boys)
ENTER M, PRESS START & B
ENTER C, PRESS START & B
ENTER A, PRESS ANY BUTTON

POWERUPS

Enter these codes at the Tonight's Matchup screen. You can get two codes in at once, and you do *not* have to hold the last button you press this time. L and R are entered on the directional pad, *not* the L and R buttons.

SHOT PERCENT DISPLAY
U,U,D,D,B

QUICK HANDS BETTER INTERCEPTION
L,L,L,L,A,R

MAX POWER, INCREASED POWER WHEN PUSHED
R,R,L,R,B,B,R

POWERUP GT (Goal Tending)
R,U,D,R,D,U

POWERUP FIRE
D,R,R,B,A,L

POWERUP TURBO
B,B,B,A,D,D,U,L

POWERUP OFFENSE
A,B,U,A,B,U,D

POWERUP 3PT (3-pointers)
U,D,L,R,L,D,U

POWERUP DUNKS
L,R,A,B,B,A

POWER BLOCK (Opponent flies across the screen when pushed)
D,R,A,B,A,R,D

BLOCK 1 OPPONENT & BOTH FALL
U,U,U,U,L,L,L,L,A,A

BLOCK 1 OPPONENT & ONLY TEAMMATE FALLS
U,U,U,U,L,L,L,L,A,B

TELEPORT PASS
U,R,R,L,A,D,L,L,R,B

HIGH SHOTS
U,D,U,D,R,U,A,A,A,A,D

SPEED UP
U,U,U,U,L,L,L,L,B,A

SLIPPERY COURT
A,A,A,A,A,R,R,R,R,R

—Thanks to Marty Chinn

(vidsourc@netcom.com) for the codes—you rule!

EARTHWORM JIM

(SNES/Genesis)

GENESIS DEBUG CODE

After you launch the cow in the Junkyard, hit Pause (the trick is supposed to work from Pause anywhere in the game, but you'll have better luck if you do it here). Now, press A plus Left and let go. Press B, B, A. Press A plus Right and let go. Press B, B, A and release Pause. If done correctly, you'll see a screen showing the programming staff of Shiny Entertainment and hear a voice calling you a cheater. On the next screen, a debug code will appear that will allow you to start at any level, view entire levels without playing them, have unbreakable glass in Down The Tubes and other cool tricks.

SNES DEBUG CODE

At any time during game play, press Pause. Hold down Left on the D-Pad and press A. Release Left and A simultaneously. Press: B, X, A, A, B, X, A. You will enter a debug screen that will allow you to start on any level, have infinite lives, the whole bit.

Also, pause the game and enter these codes for other neat stuff:

PLASMA SHOT (works only once)
SNES: A, A, B + L button, A, A, X, B + L button, X
GENESIS: C, A, B, C, A, B, A, C

FREE CONTINUE
SNES: A, B, A, B, X, Y, X, Y
GENESIS: A, B + Left, A, B, A, B, C, A

REFILL BULLETS TO 1000 (works only once)
SNES: A, B, B + L button, B, X, A, X, X
GENESIS: A, B, B, B, C, A, C, C

ONE FREE JIM
SNES: B, B, A, X + Y, A, A, A, A
GENESIS: B, B, C, C, A, A, A, A

PITFALL:
THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

(SNES/Genesis/Sega CD)

WARP TO HIDDEN ORIGINAL ATARI 2600 VERSION
(enter at main screen)
SNES: Select, A (6 times), Select, Start
GENESIS/SEGA CD: Down, A (26 times), Down

UNLIMITED CONTINUES
SNES: Press Start three times at the Continue screen
GENESIS/SEGA CD: C, C, C, C, Left, A, Down, Up, Down

99 WEAPONS AT THE START
GENESIS/SEGA CD: A, B, Up, C, A, C, A

START WITH 9 LIVES
GENESIS/SEGA CD: Right, A, Down, B, Right, A, B, Up, Down

SNES GAME GENIE CODES
DB6B-C4A1 + DBC6-34DE Start with 10 lives
086B-4D6A Get 3x energy from sacred hearts
74A4-CF69 Sling stones do mega-damage
ED6C-CDDA + D46C-CD0A Time keeper power-up lasts longer
DDA6-3D69 Infinite Stones of Pacal
DDA5-1709 Infinite sling stones
DDA5-3700 Infinite boomerangs
DD6F-C7A1 Moon-jump

MADDEN NFL '95

(SNES/Genesis)

Play as SUPER-TEAMS Jacksonville Jaguars or Carolina Panthers
(enter at team select screen)
SNES: L button, R button, L button, R button, A
GENESIS: B, A, C, A, C

STAR WARS ARCADE

(32X)

TIMER TRICKERY
Pause the game and enter Left, Down, A, C, Down, Up to reset the timer. Enter Down, B, B, Up, Right, Left to turn the timer off completely.

HIDDEN GAME PIANO
Pause and enter Up, Right, Left, A, Down, C to access the hidden game piano!

DOOM

(32X)

GOD MODE AND FULL AMMO
Want invincibility? Pause the game, then press X, Z, Mode and Up at the same time. The old IDKFA all-weapons code shows up here, too; pause the game then hold A, C, Mode and Up.

X-MEN:
MUTANT APOCALYPSE

(SNES)

GO STRAIGHT TO FINAL STAGE WITH 3 CYCLOPS, 1 PSYLOCKE, 2 GAMBIT, 3 BEAST AND 4 WOLVERINE
Password: Magneto, Wolverine, Beast, Wolverine, Cyclops, Wolverine, Psylocke, Xavier
—Mark Still

Detroit, MI

THE LION KING

(SNES/Genesis)

SNES GAME GENIE CODES
C291-5763 Roaring doesn't decrease your roar meter
C293-E703 Don't lose roar power when you get hit
C298-7DDE Almost infinite energy
CE6E-8464 Infinite lives

GENESIS GAME GENIE CODES
ABZB-WAG6 Almost invincible
AV6B-4A5G Infinite lives
PVYV-4A4G Infinite continues
A3XV-WA7J Roaring does not reduce roar meter
A3ZB-WA3E Getting hit does not reduce roar meter
BK4V-5A8W Start on Level 10-Pride Rock

ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

(Atari Jaguar)

As the marine, hold PAUSE and OPTION and press 1 and 3 keys simultaneously. Then hold the 2, 5, 7, 9 keys together. You will hear the Predator laugh to confirm activation. Now, press OPTION and 6 to raise security level, and press OPTION 9 to lower it (not like you'd want to). Press OPTION 8 to toggle motion tracker on/off. Press OPTION and 1-4 to activate different guns, or hold OPTION and press 1, 2, 3 and 4 at same time to recharge all weapons!

dangerous curves

By Derek Edwards

Male superheroes carry **big guns**, but comic book chicks have big [*insert offensive term here*]. Prepare yourself for a complete overview of comics' **all-time sexiest heroines** as FLUX presents The History Of The Comic Book Babe!

Super-heroing has long been a man's game. National's *Action Comics* #1, in which Superman, lifting a car full of gangsters over his head, first strode onto the scene, set the precedent: tights were mainly for men. Women got the shaft, relegated to being second bananas and supporting characters. Hell, even Robin, the Boy Wonder, got better press, and he was just a little kid in pantyhose.

But today, things are different. Female superheroes no longer play second fiddle: they're equal, if not better, to men. They can stand up to any male (or alien, or undead beast, or the occasional drooling homicidal maniac for that matter) and kick butt and leave footprints. The superhero women of today can hold their heads up high; they have powers that their forebears in the early comics could only dream about.

But we aren't here to celebrate equality, then or now. We're here to celebrate that happy compatibility between Spandex and the nubile female form and to applaud those bodacious, cape-bedecked maidens who give us so much viewing pleasure. Because let's face it fellas, looking at muscle-bound men in tights just plain sucks.

So said, FLUX brings you a look at the beautiful women of comics, a history of killer-looking babes in four-color, from the early days of the Depression right up to today.

WHAT IN HELL—?!

©TM 1995 Top Cow Productions

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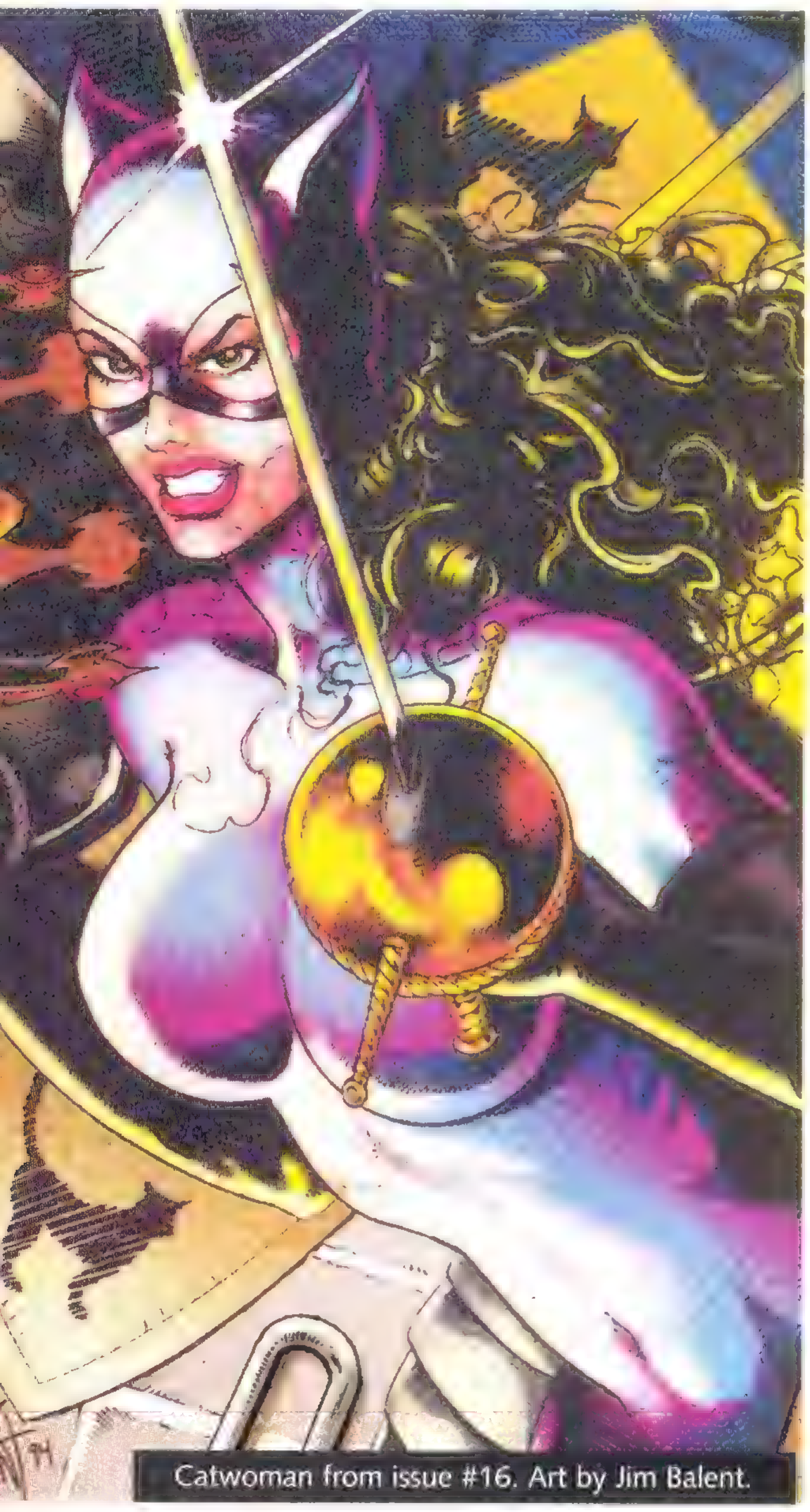
INTELL NCE HAS PLA OUR TARGET BE DECK DOMINIQ AN YO MANAGE E UNT I RET N?
T BE AS ICK A CAN...

Jocelyn and Cyblade from Cyberforce Origins: Cyblade issue #1. Art by Joe Benitez.

THE THIRTIES - FIFTIES

Take away the romance between Clark Kent and his long-time steady Lois Lane, and all you have is a geek in glasses who occasionally does something nice for the world. Lois has long been the gas in Supe's engine and for good reason. As the intrepid girl reporter, Lois was always in trouble, or pulling some scam to find out who the visitor from Krypton really was—and her boldness made her as attractive now as it did then.

The most truly heroic figure to come out of the early days of yesteryear was Wonder Woman. Yet despite her impressive stature as the main female in the DC/National stable, she never had it as good as she did in the late Eighties when she was rebuilt from the ground up after the *Crisis On Infinite Earths*.

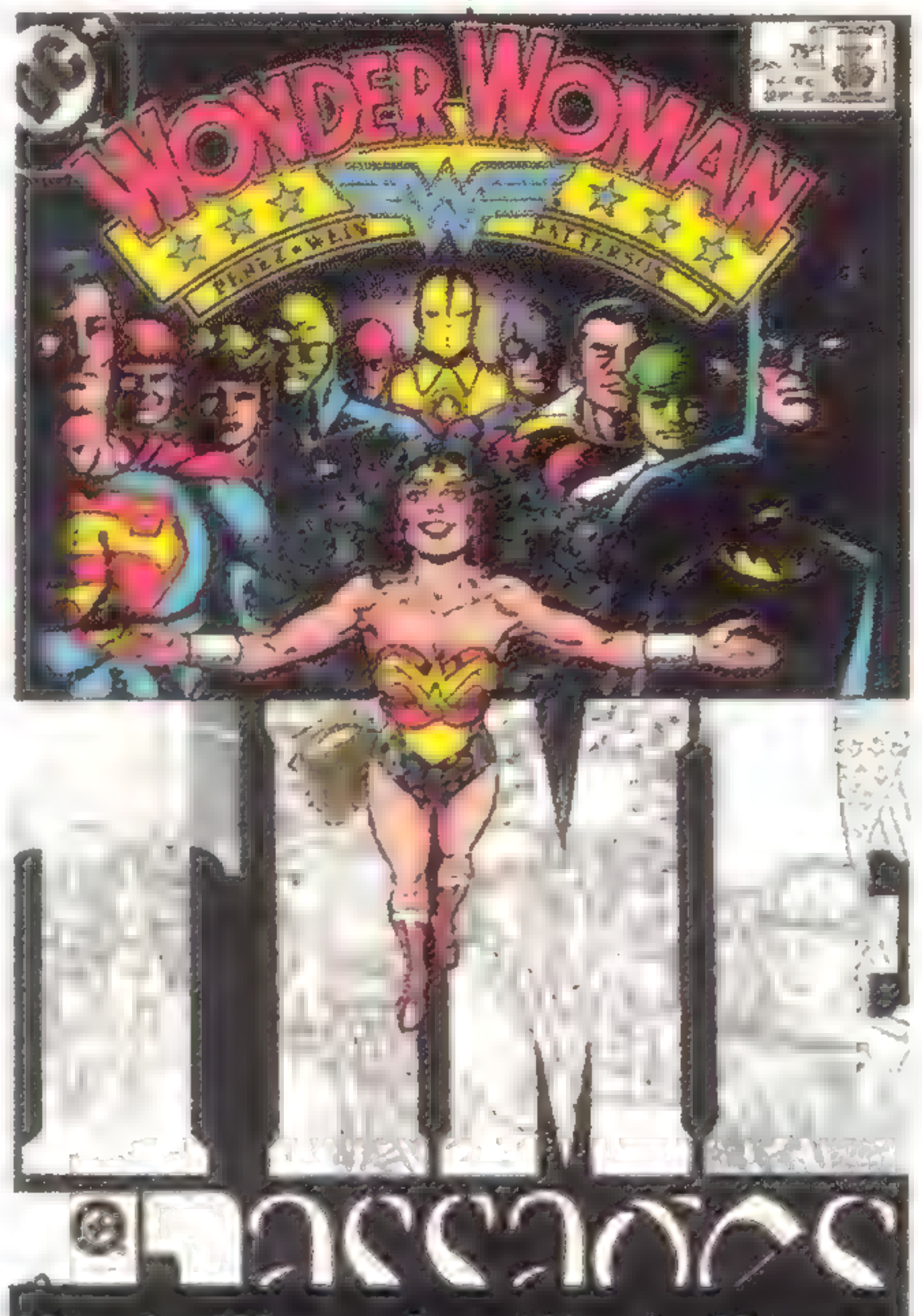

Catwoman from issue #16. Art by Jim Balent.

Sheena, Queen of the Jungle, proved that you just couldn't go wrong with a buxom blonde in the perfect costume—a tight, skimpy leopard skin.

THE SIXTIES

With the Sixties dawned the Marvel Age of comics—angst, drama and social problems by the score. Oh, and let's not forget the most important thing, the Jack Kirby babes. As King of Comics, Kirby managed to set the tone for all of Marvel's amazing output in that decade, starting with the Fantastic Four's Sue "The Invisible Girl" Storm. Sue was a beautiful woman blessed not only with daring bravery but also an inexplicable readiness to faint at any given moment (depending on the evil perpetrated by that month's bad guy).

Kirby didn't stop with Sue, but spread his talents among several heroic ladies, including Thor's old squeeze Lady Sif (a testament to Kirby's ability to make armor look sexy); Medusa of the Inhumans (whose hair could do things you wouldn't believe); the lovely Scarlett Witch, a woman who should never have given up the extra-long gloves; and the vastly under used Jean "Marvel Girl" Grey, who went on to become the vastly overused Phoenix (see the Eighties) only to die again and be reborn for the second time as Marvel Girl.

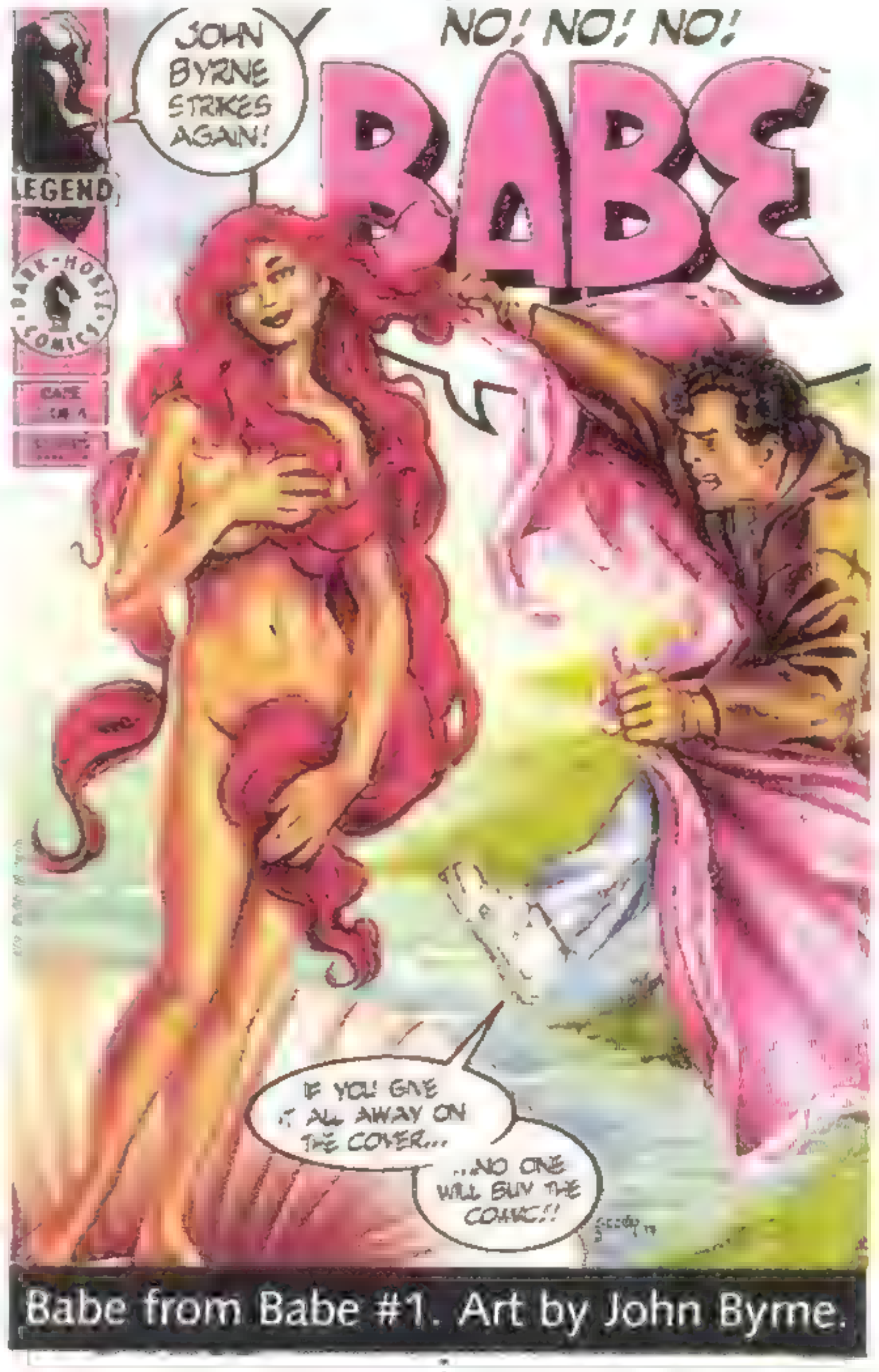


Wonder Woman from Wonder Woman #8. Art by George Perez.

> Lady Death makes heading into the afterlife look good—but things always look good when you wear a Hell-made wardrobe and have physical attributes that defy gravity.

THE SEVENTIES

The Seventies were a relatively dry period for comic beauties. The only interesting new developments came courtesy of Marvel, who wanted to find a way to acknowledge that decade's strides in terms of equal rights and its fight to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, so they created some female counterparts to some of their favorite male stars.


JOHN BYRNE STRIKES AGAIN!
NO! NO! NO!
LEGEND
BABE
IF YOU GAVE IT ALL AWAY ON THE COVER...
...NO ONE WILL BUY THE COMIC!!
Babe from Babe #1. Art by John Byrne.

Spider-woman, for instance, bore absolutely no relation to Spider-man, and it was too bad—this flying detective with venom blasts definitely had a fun ride in her short career. Her outfit, again not even remotely close to the wall-crawler's, was nevertheless magnificent, a red and yellow number with some webbing right where she needed it most...her underarms.

Not quite so lucky was Miss Carol Danvers, who lead a double life as Ms. Marvel, a counterpart to the late Captain Mar-vell of the Kree. Carol started with a Supergirl-type mini skirt and cape combo, then got daring with a costume reminiscent of *I Dream Of Jeannie*.

Marvel also decided to cash in on the hit *Incredible Hulk* TV show, and created the Savage She-Hulk. It was a silly title (which John Byrne took to new heights of silliness recently), but had a look that could stop traffic—a green-skinned giantess in torn clothing.

DC also wanted to do their part for women's lib, trying it with some of their older characters instead of cashing in on new ones with similar names. So, when Batman made his comeback in the Seventies to Dark Knight status, his rogue's gallery of villains did too—chief among them his off-and-on love interest, Catwoman. This purple-clad gymnast has taken new life in her current solo-series, where she proves that over-endowment never gets in the way of a capable, trained athlete.

THE EIGHTIES

Despite being created in the Sixties and getting a major rebirth in the Seventies, the mutant team of the Uncanny X-Men didn't become a semi-household name until the Eighties. With that fame, they also brought a bevy of beauties, thanks to the wisdom of writer Chris Claremont, who understood well that an over-abundance of male mutant stars was not only unrealistic, but much less fun to look at.

Rogue is enjoying great popularity today, but back then she was an outcast—she'd been a bad guy, was raised by a bad guy, and would probably always have been a bad guy....but the Scarlet Witch proved she could change, and so has Rogue.

The most powerful mutant is, of course, Phoenix, who was initially Jean Grey, then just an energy being with Jean's mind, and then at last just Jean's daughter from the future. She illustrated the fact that being all-powerful helps you

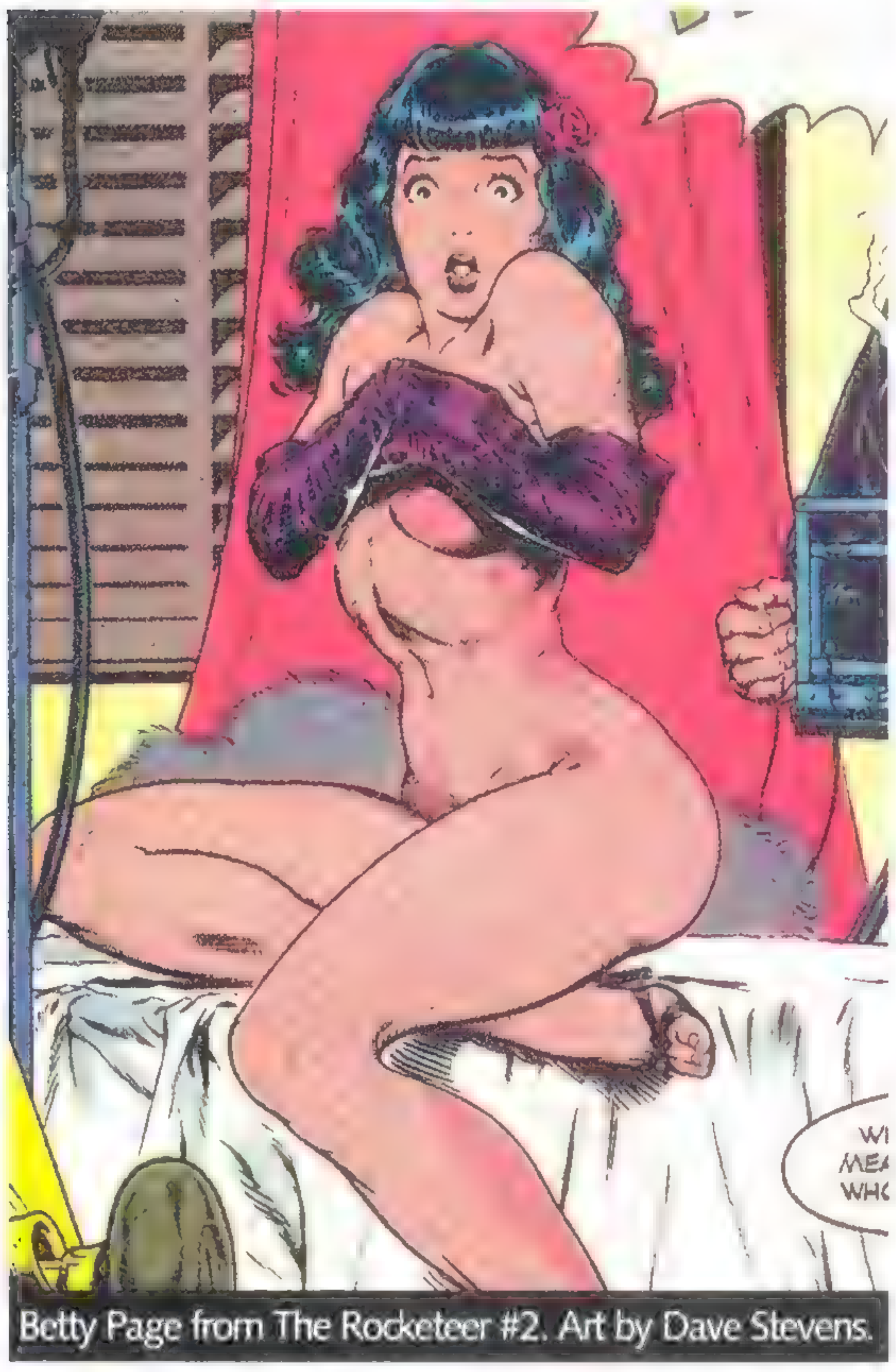
Catwoman ©™ 1994 DC Comics; Wonder Woman ©™ 1987 DC Comics; Babe ©™ 1994 John Byrne

come up with some great costumes.

No other mutant could ever come close to the majestic beauty of Storm. Ororo has had her ups and downs, but in recent years she has returned to a look of regal elegance, with hair that seems to be everywhere as the wind blows it at her command.

Storm's beauty notwithstanding, for adolescents of the Eighties, there was only one mutant female to die for. And, like any flighty teenager, she couldn't decide on a good superhero name, drifting from Sprite, to Ariel, and then finally settling on ShadowCat. Moniker muddles aside, no one could capture the imagination like Kitty Pryde, the young lady whose age placed her in a bracket with that of *X-Men* readers.

But don't think that mutants were it for the Eighties: there is one other lady who deserves special attention. Her name is simply Betty, and you can find her in Dave Stevens' graphic novel and series *The Rocketeer*. Modeled on the delicious morsel of cheesecake that was Fifties pin-up Bettie Page, Betty is one of the most gorgeous ladies ever to grace a superhero comic, heroine or not. Betty...WOW!



Betty Page from The Rocketeer #2. Art by Dave Stevens.

©TM 1983 Dave Stevens

THE NINETIES

What better to way to sum up the bodelicious babes of our current decade than to talk of the afterlife? For instance, you have Vampirella, a Frazetta-inspired character who has had a new lease on life in the Nineties. Part of that might be due to the fact that she boasts one of the greatest costumes ever conceived for any female character anywhere.

Chaos Comics' Lady Death is a woman who makes heading into the afterlife look good, but then things *always* look good when you wear a Hell-made wardrobe and have physical attributes that defy gravity. As the ruler of the underworld, she has even been honored with her own swimsuit issue—and the beaches of the beyond never looked so hot.

Death can also be a peaceful thing, especially if you are an outcast Sohei warrior looking for revenge, like Crusade Entertainment's Shi. This lean n' mean killing machine likes to sit around and meditate in her birthday suit, then put on her red, skimpy padded outfit and take out evildoers with her ancient weapons.

Image Comics has managed to introduce more babes by itself in the last few years than many companies have in the last few decades. All of them are remarkable for their bravery and skills, not to mention ranking high in the schwing-inducing department:

The *WildC.A.T.S* Covert Action Team is graced with three exceptional-looking women: the silver-skinned Void, former dancer Voodoo and the ancient assassin Zealot.

Cyberforce's Cyblade possesses everything men could ask for—money, beauty, and electromagnetic energy, all in one awesome package.

Wildstorm Productions' *Gen13* has its own group of babes, but none more majestic than Lauren Holly look-a-like Caitlin Fairchild.

And of course there's Leanna Creel—aka Riptide—the busty beauty from Rob Liefeld's *Team Youngblood*.

Image's latest femme fatale is more than just a woman. She's a fiery-haired angel named Angela, one of the ancient beings who takes out demon spawn (like Spawn).

DEATH.
IT NEVER SOUNDED SO GOOD.
TALES FROM THE CRYPT
TALES FROM THE CRYPT PRESENTS
DEMON KNIGHT
THE KILLER MOVIE SOUNDTRACK
THE HEARING AID
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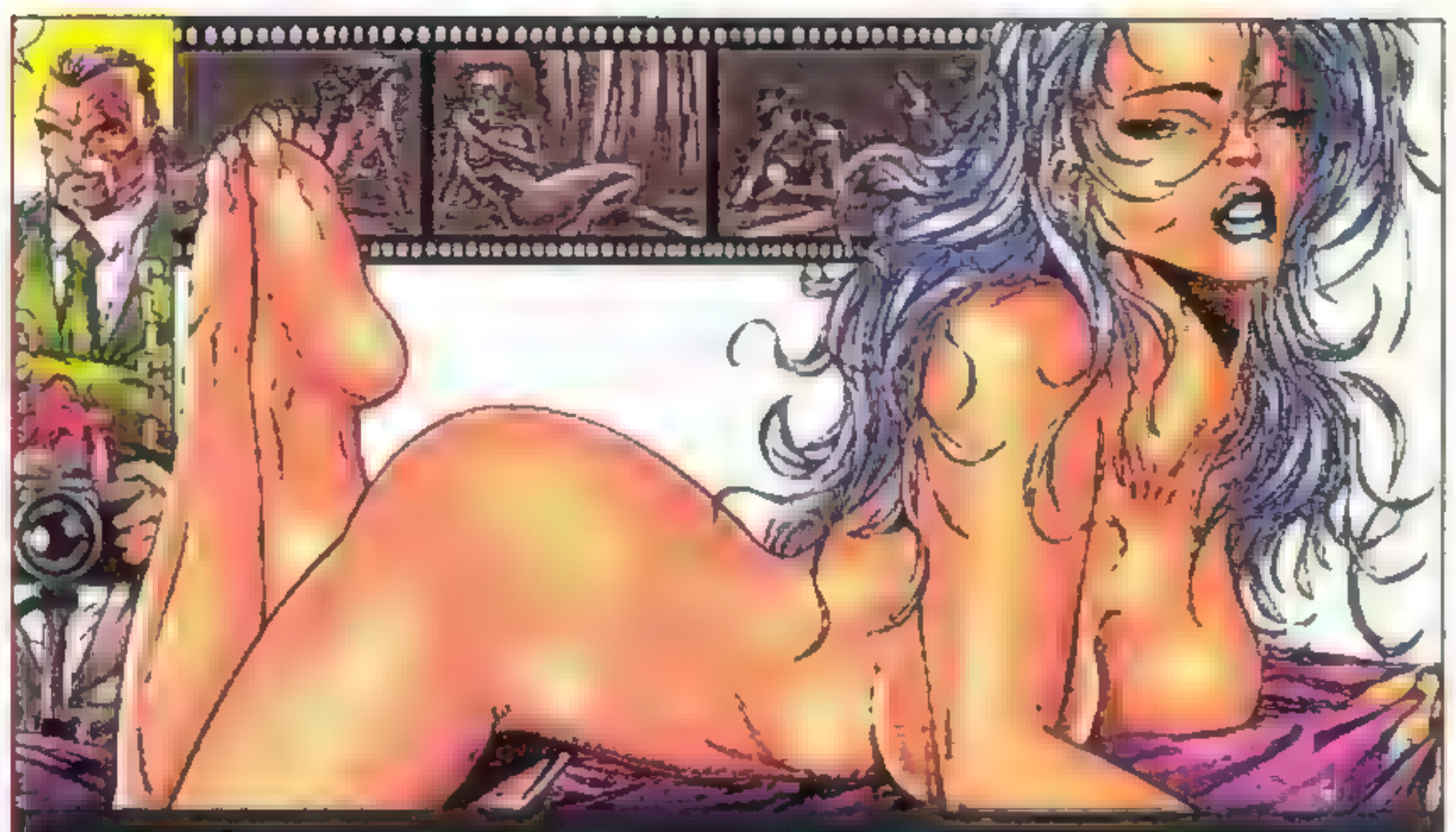
FEATURING PANTERA, MEGADETH, ROLLINS BAND, SEPULTURA, BIOHAZARD, MACHINE HEAD, MINISTRY, MELVINS, GRAVEDIGGAZ, FILTER

YOU HAVE ABOUT A *HEART-BEAT* TO SURRENDER, MEDDLER...
...BEFORE MY *ELECTROBLASTS* DO THE SAME FOR *YOU*.

In Cyberforce #9, Cyblade shows off her glowing-fist technique—hardly her best asset. Art by Marc Silvestri.

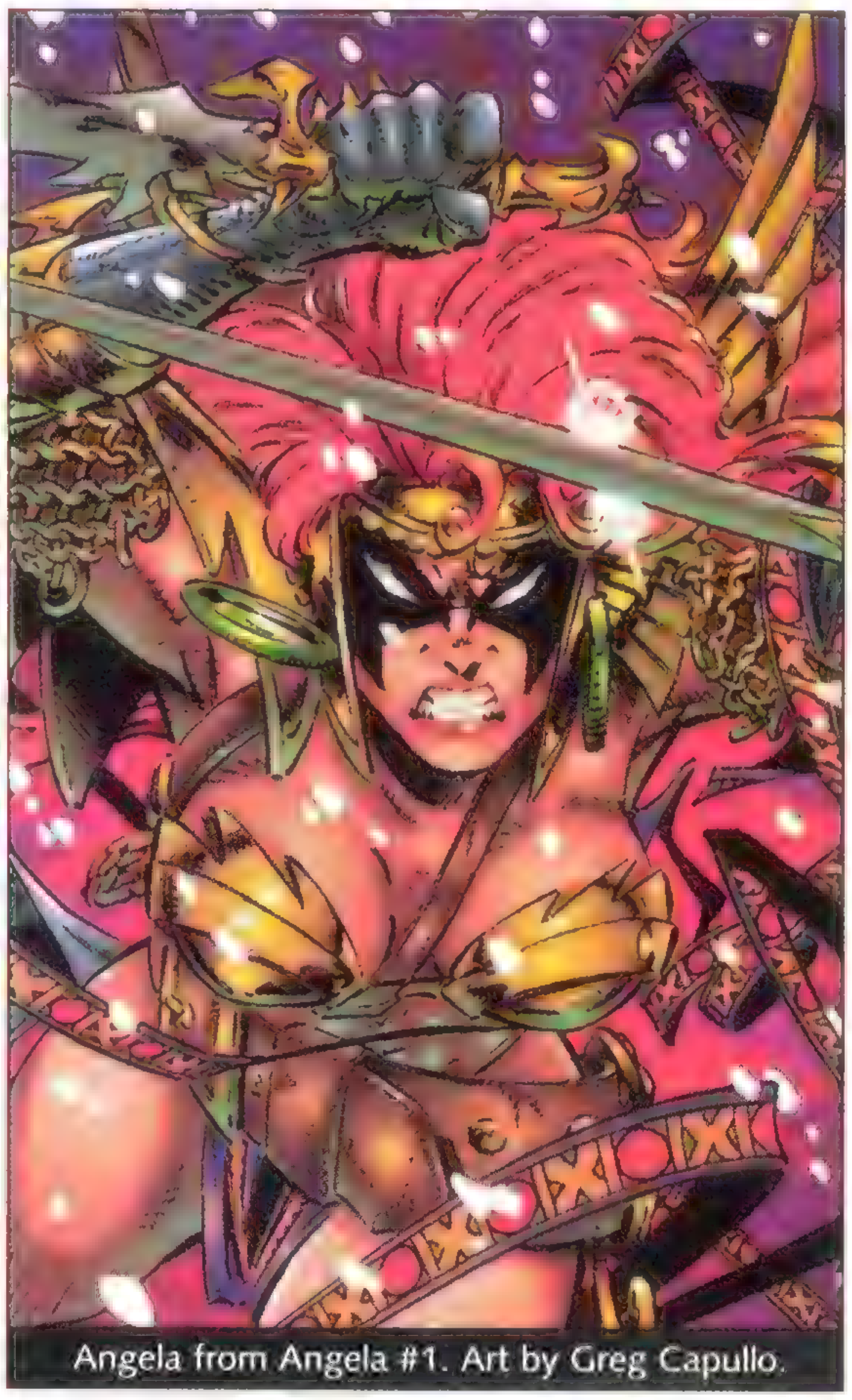


Riptide from Team Youngblood #14. Art by John Stinsman and Jaimie Mendoza.

Image hasn't totally cornered the babe market though—check out Topps Comics' *Zorro* books for Lady Rawhide, the black swordsman's counterpart.

Dark Horse has also squeezed a few heroines out of their Comics' Greatest World universe, the most notable of these being the newly-created Ghost—a sometimes-invisible wraith woman who believes she's dead. Ghost knows what boys like, and she's the sexiest, best-dressed and least touchable tease to ever walk through walls.

What better babe to round out our survey than Babe, John Byrne's latest creation for the Legend imprint at Dark Horse? Who's that mysterious, super-strong, incredibly tall and beautiful red-head who stumbles into the life of a scuzzy Hollywood agent and his secretary? Well, she's five separate women rolled into one—that's Babe.



Angela from Angela #1. Art by Greg Capullo.

And thus we conclude our review of the elite corps that is this century's battalion of comic book babes. Multi-talented, intelligent and supremely gifted in more areas than delicacy—and censorship laws—permit us to recount, these vixens can now proudly display their charms in full confidence that they will command the same respectful (well, sort of) attention enjoyed by their masculine brethren.

Cyblade ©™ 1994 Top Cow Productions; Riptide ©™ 1994 Rob Liefeld; Angela ©™ 1994 Todd McFarlane Productions

dangerous curves

cover girls

Interviews by Chris Golden

Hangin' with Steven Hughes, Bill Tucci and Buzz—the artists behind Lady Death, Shi and Vampirella, comics' leading ladies

"My forte, my calling, has always been drawing the female form." —Steven Hughes, Lady Death artist.

©TM 1995 Brian Pulido

When we—the FLUX staff, that is—made the decision to release a special, comic-sized edition of our magazine to the comic book retail market, we were immediately faced with one all-important question: Who should be on the cover? Regardless of which comic book characters we chose, one thing was for sure—we knew the cover had to be hot. Not just hot, sizzling. Like bacon frying—that kind of sizzle. So with that, we had ourselves a concept. Now all we needed was the character. Then we thought—what comic book babe exemplifies the meaning of the word "hot?" Lady Death? Shi? How 'bout a classic fem like Vampirella? All great choices, no doubt—but we needed something even hotter. And then it became clear: any cover that featured all *three* of these heavenly heroines in one awesome jam piece would surely be the hottest magazine cover in history.

And here you have it: Lady Death, Vampirella and Shi—together for the first time. *Ever*.

Now let's meet the poison pens behind this mighty piece of art:

Chaos! Comics' Steven Hughes is the man behind Lady Death's to-die-for bod and Evil Ernie's nasty attitude. Hughes' entry into the comics field came during the mid-Eighties "black and white invasion" with an Aircel comic called *Stark Future*. After supplying art for several other independents, including

Bladesman, Hughes went on to co-found Chaos Comics, publisher of the *Evil Ernie* mini-series in which Lady Death first appeared. And now that Lady Death has her own series, Hughes feels right at home with his work.

"My forte, my calling, has always been drawing the female form," says Hughes. "That's what got me noticed. And it all comes straight out of my head—I have a bad habit of not referencing much."

With many comic book fans citing Ms. Death as the ultimate babe, it's obvious that Hughes understands exactly what qualities a comic heroine should possess.

"She should be very strong, self-assured and totally focused in her desires," says Hughes. "In the past, women in comics were usually subject to victimization, but nowadays they're much stronger. Why should they always be fodder?"

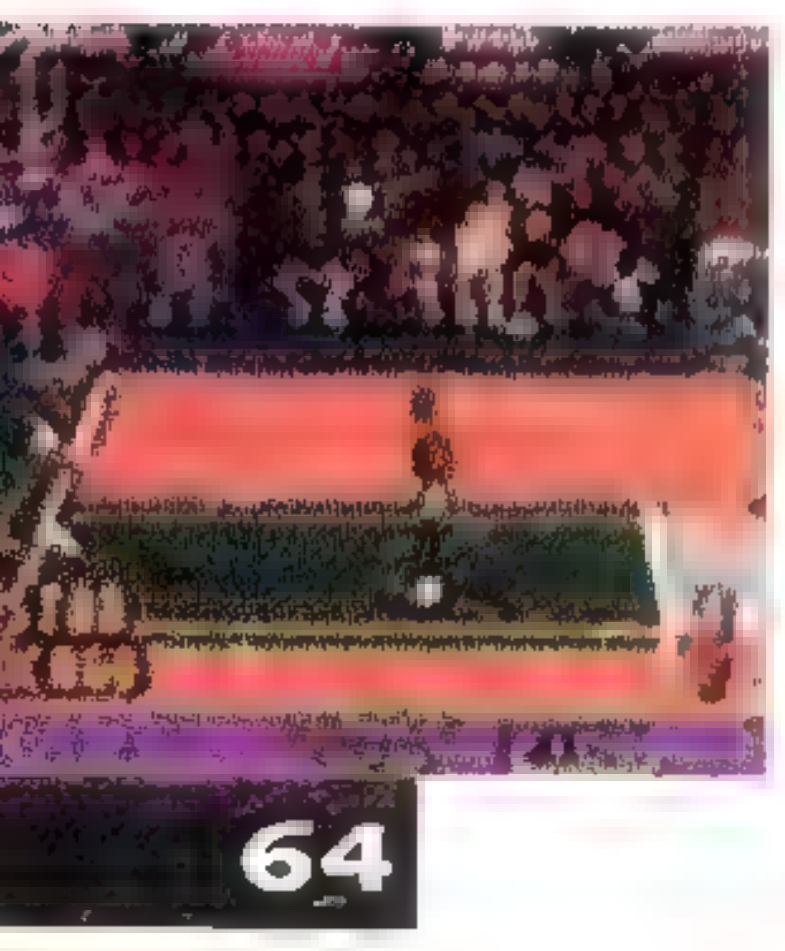
If anyone in comics understands the essence of drawing babes, it's Buzz. The 25-year-old artist who emigrated from the small Southeast Asian nation of Burma in 1982 has been drawing Vampirella since July '93, when he penciled *Vengeance of Vampirella* #1 for Harris Comics. Since then, Buzz has worked on numerous Vampirella projects including *Vengeance* issues #2 and #9 and providing cover art for #4, #8 and #9. With so many Vampi pieces under his belt, Buzz knows exactly what it takes to make the blood-sucking beauty from Draculon look her best.

> "I do have some ability to draw women without having to look at skin books." —BUZZ

"If an artist knows human anatomy well enough, he can pretty much come up with a decent drawing of Vampirella," says Buzz. "I'd have to use reference if I needed to draw a Ford Bronco since I just can't pull one out of my head. I don't think Harris hired me to draw Vampirella because I can look at a photo and copy it. I do have some ability to draw women without having to look at skin books."

So what's Buzz's criteria for drawing sexy female characters?

"First and foremost, she has to have a good sense of humor," says Buzz. "Secondly, she's gotta be good looking. But then you have to build from that. Okay, she's beautiful, what else? If I shake her head, does it rattle? A woman has to have a lot more than just looks."



More than just looks? If Buzz is refering to any female character in particular, it's probably Shi. The creation of Bill Tucci (who writes, draws and publishes *Shi* himself), Shi is the ideal

continued on pg. 75

> "Shi doesn't have big breasts. She doesn't walk around in a thong or high heels—she's not sleazy."—Bill Tucci.

©TM 1995 Crusade Comics

"My, Vampi, what big...uhh...teeth you have!" From Vengeance Of Vampirella #10. Art by Adam Hughes.

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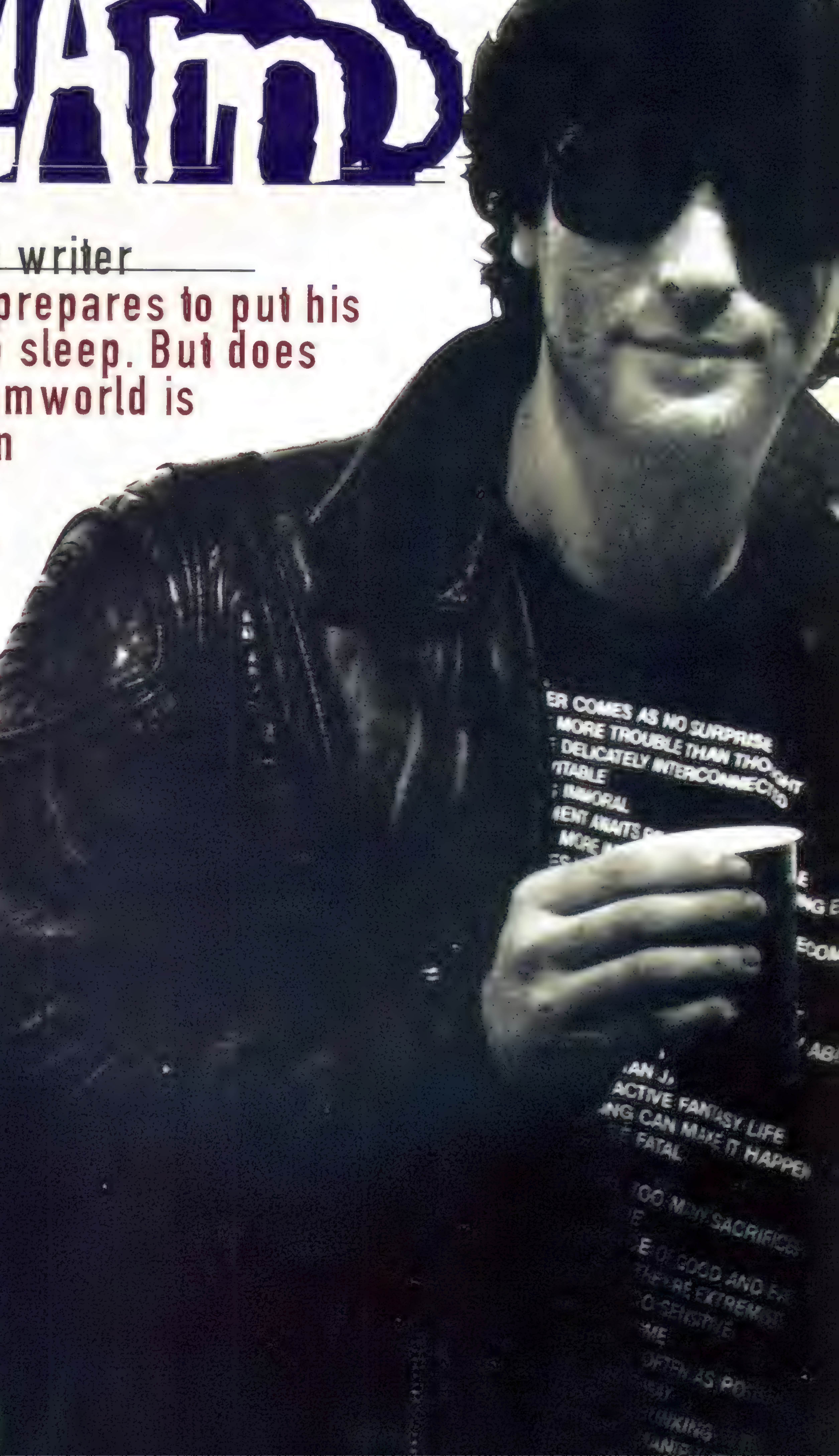
SWEET DREAMS

by anya Martin

Hot-shot comic writer Neil Gaiman prepares to put his best-selling title to sleep. But does this mean the dreamworld is crumbling? Gaiman the Great gives FLUX the lowdown on the future of Sandman.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MORE TROUBLE THAN THOUGHT
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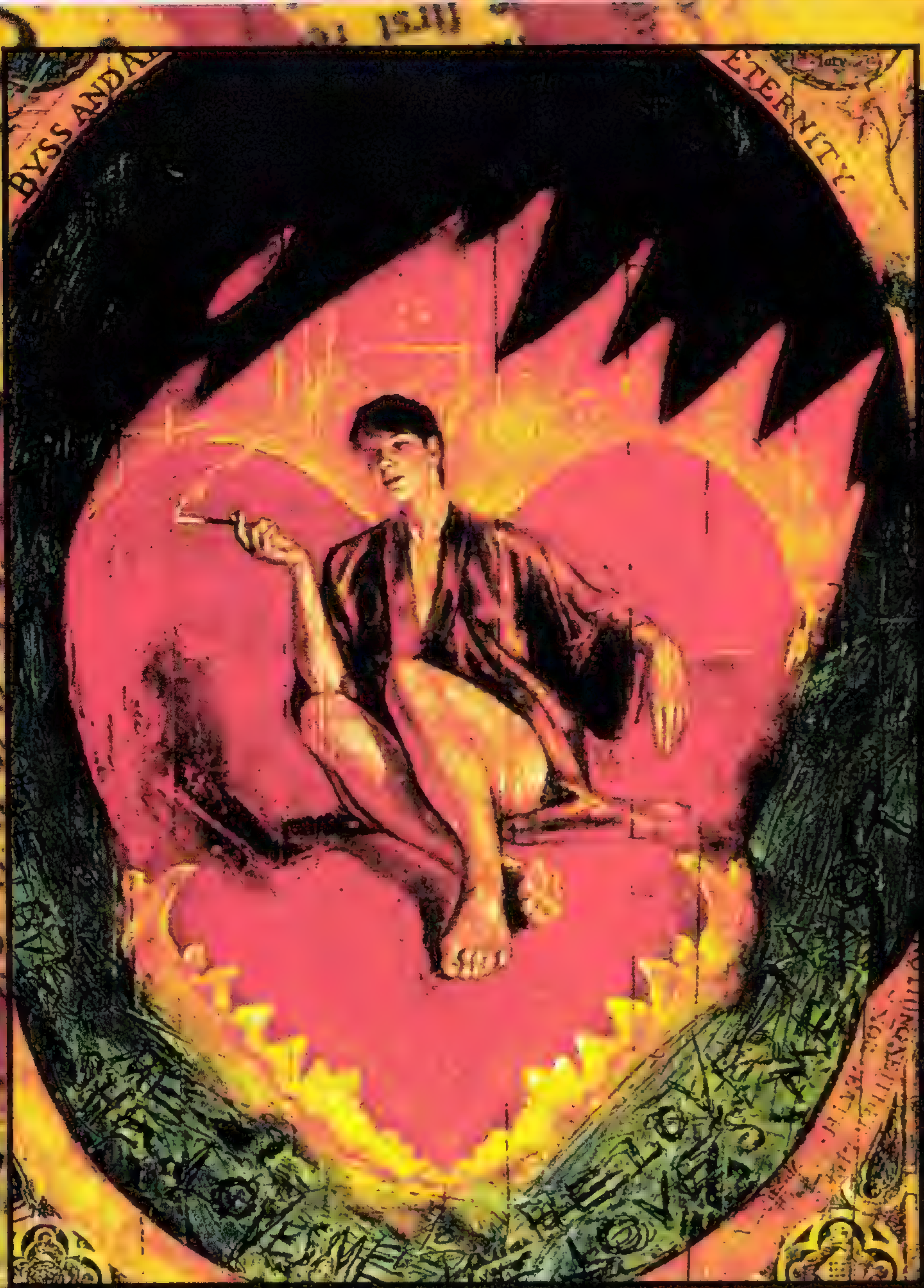
INKING

It's Atlanta just before Christmas. Tomorrow it'll be Boulder, Colorado. He's already been to New York and London, but there's still California on the weekend. The guy everyone is standing in line to meet is always seen in a black T-shirt and black leather jacket, and many of the hundreds of fans who have showed up are also in black leather. He's friends with Tori Amos and Alice Cooper, and girls regularly ask him to autograph their chests.

No, it's not some cramped record shop hosting an in-store by another super-cool rock dude. The scene is Oxford Book Store—an average stop on the book signing tour of Neil Gaiman, writer of DC Comics' best-selling *Sandman* monthly series, who is on the road promoting his new graphic novel, *Mr. Punch* (DC).



Had this been a signing for *Sandman* or his current *Angela* three-part miniseries spin-off of *Spawn* for Image Comics instead of a limited edition hardcover book, Gaiman estimates the turn-out would have been in the thousands. And he's probably right. But despite his, and his prize title's, incredible following, Gaiman plans to end the series that has made him not just one of comics' hottest creators, but one of the few comics writers who can boast having many fans who don't usually buy comics—the just read *his* stuff.

So is this the end of the dreamworld? Not by a long shot. *Sandman* #75, which ships in December 1995, just marks the end of the monthly adventures of the Lord Of Dreams. Gaiman plans one limited series for each of his six brothers and sisters from the family of the Endless, beginning with a second story about Death, comics' hottest Goth chick, called "The Time Of Your Life" (to be drawn by Chris Bachalo, of *Generation X* and *Death: The High Cost Of Living* fame).

And to fill the void on a monthly basis, DC Vertigo Editor Karen Berger plans to launch an entirely new series called *The Dreaming* in March 1996. *The Dreaming* won't feature Sandman, but will explore his kingdom through the adventures of the old series' strange supporting cast. *Sandman* cover artist Dave McKean (who often collaborates with Gaiman) will provide more bizarre painted covers, with text and art to be dreamed up not by one regular team, but an ongoing progression of comic's hottest writers and artists, with Gaiman serving as Creative Consultant.

"Why not?" answered Gaiman when asked why he's decided to end the series that rocketed his career. After a thoughtful pause, he added that he had always intended to close *Sandman*, "while it was still fun. Too many things have continued on until they become sad parodies of themselves. Sometimes, it's best to stop when you're ahead."

Regarding future comic titles that deal with the world of the Dreaming, Berger intends to preserve Gaiman's vision, while allowing other writers to explore the world freely. "Dreaming obviously can be very personal," she offered. "Dreams can fulfill people's aspirations or they can be your dreams at night. There was a wealth of ideas and story possibilities that Neil tapped into. I respected Neil's wishes by not using any of the characters he created, but he also used a lot of old characters from DC horror and supernatural titles of the Seventies as denizens of the Dreaming. I thought it would be interesting to keep these DC characters as a loose base for the series. I wanted to be able to continue to explore the concept of dreams in the atmosphere that Neil created, and yet by no means continue *Sandman*."

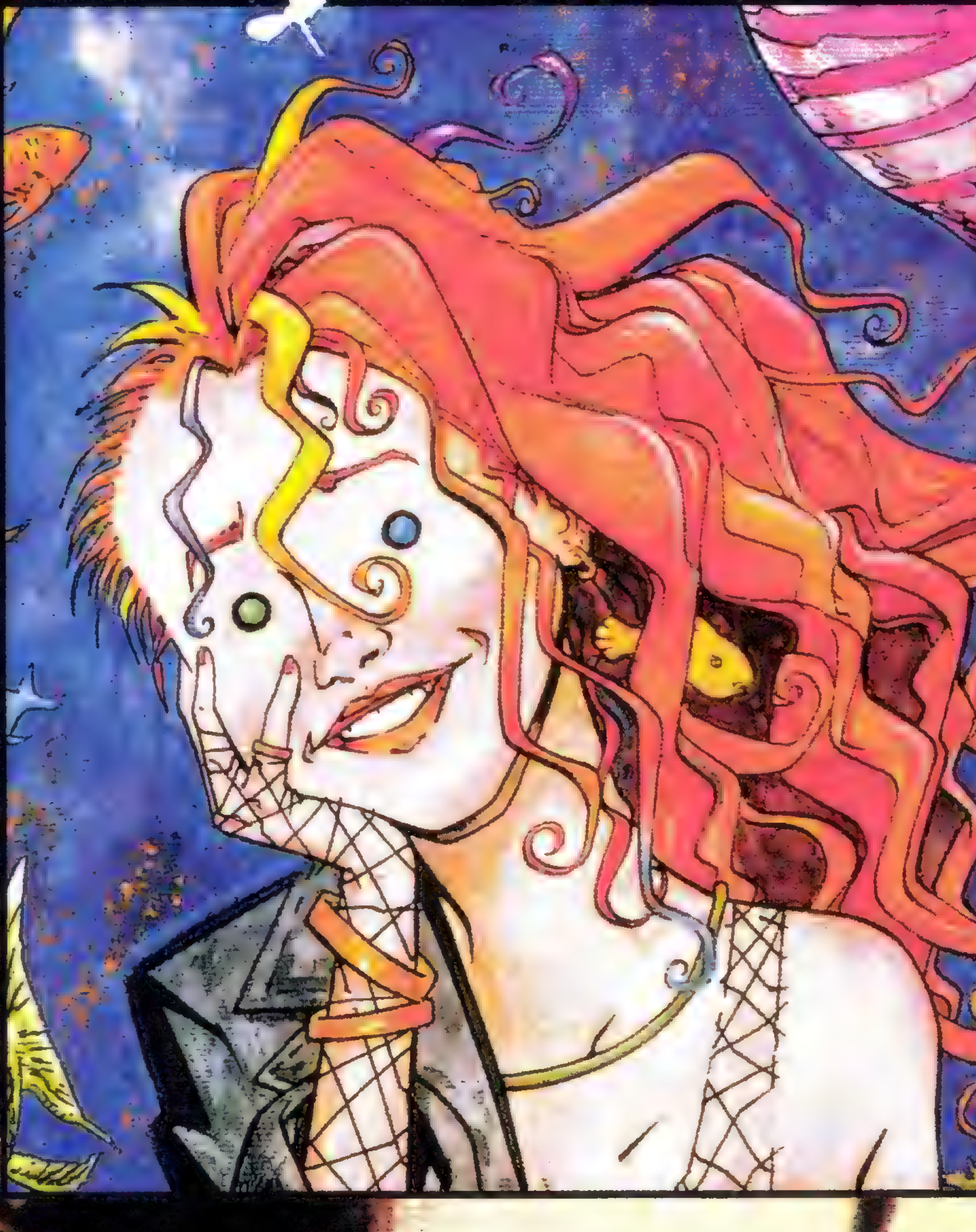
Or as Alisa Kwitney, whom Berger appointed as editor of *The Dreaming*, observed: "Neil has said that the Dreaming is not only vaster than anyone has imagined, but it is vaster than anyone *can* imagine. Neil's stories have only touched on the lives of the Endless, but we're not looking at the White House of the Dreaming. We're just looking *everywhere else*."

Characters set to appear in the pages of *The Dreaming* include Cain and Abel, gargoyles Gregory and Goldie ("of course"), Lucien the librarian, "whatever raven is currently in residence," Eve the Rave Woman, Mad Hettie, various residents of *Faerie* and *The Books Of Magic*, and the three witches—"although they don't live in the Dreaming. Of course, we don't say their names because then they attack us."

Beginning this month with issue #68, *Sandman* will go from a four- to a six-week shipping schedule. Gaiman is not anxious to talk much about the final issues, although he does reveal that the climax will be, in typical Neil-speak, more of an "anti-climax," which means don't count on a predictable, ordinary ending.

While Gaiman expects this signing tour to be his last, he does have plans for future public appearances.

"I want to take over a theater and do readings," he says. "That would be much more fun than sitting and staring at people's belt buckles all day and saying, 'What a lovely name; how do you spell it?'"



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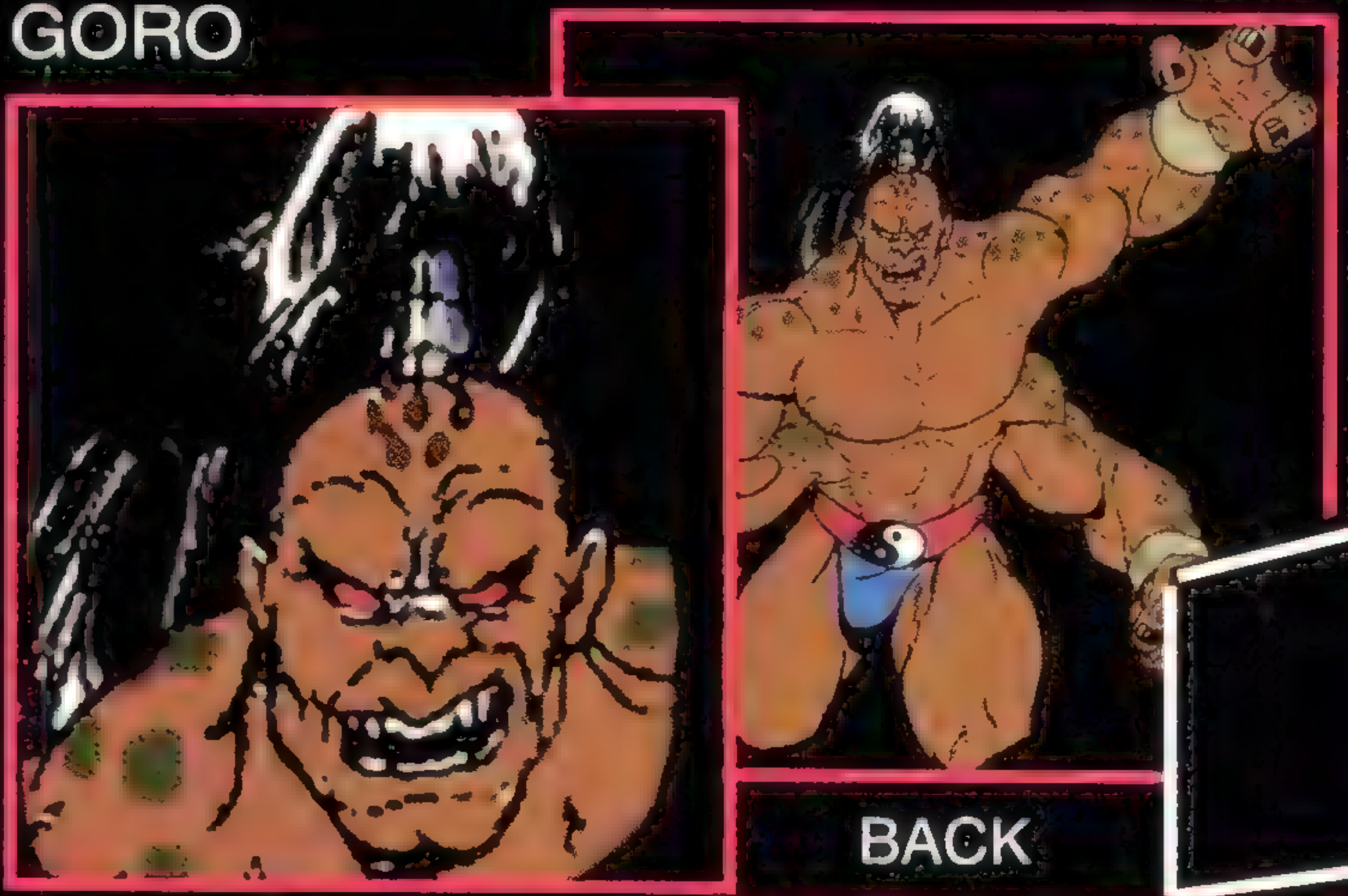

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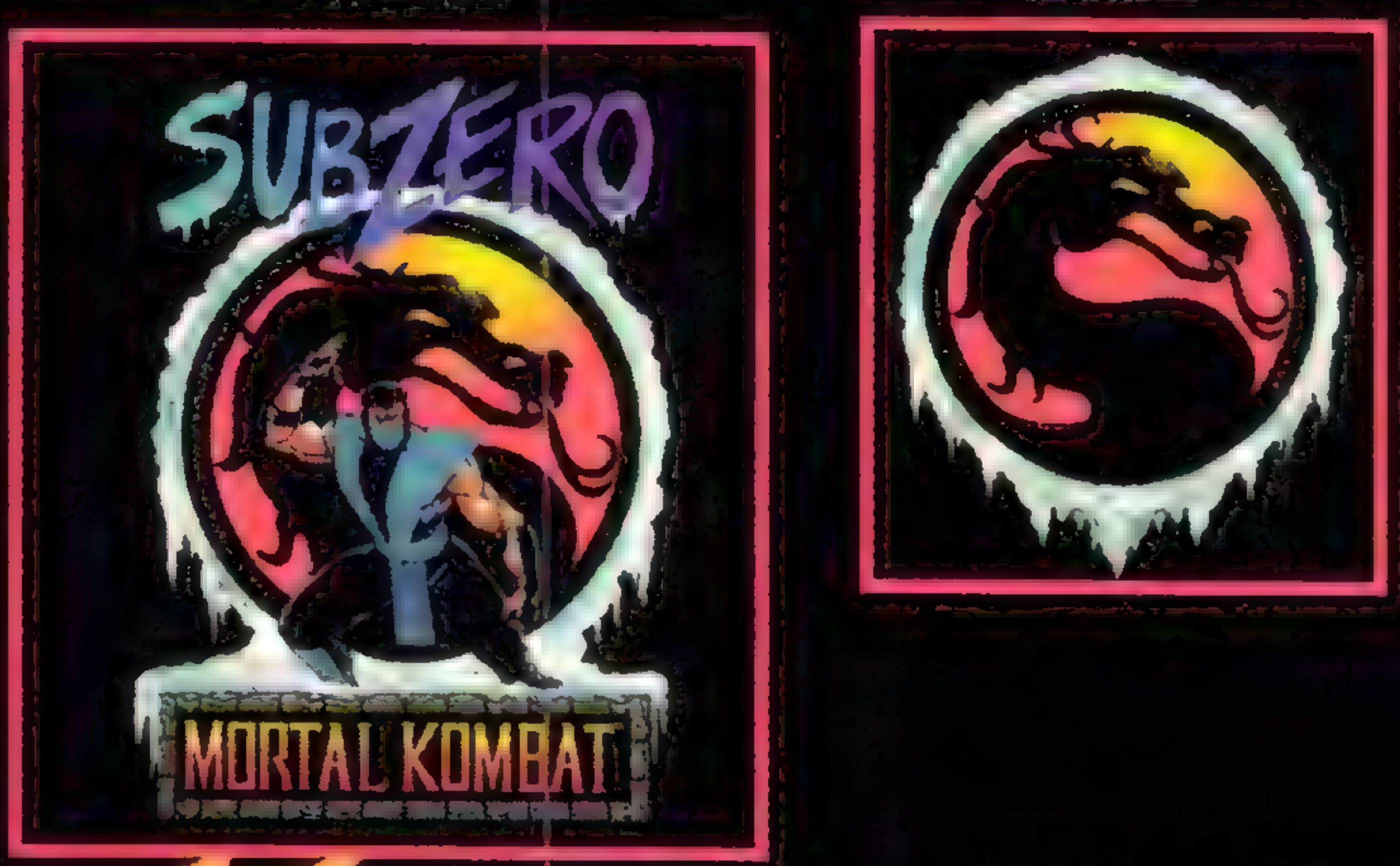

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animania

by Jeff Yang

The Ultimate Insider's Guide to Japanese animation....in English.

AKIRA: STREAMLINE PICTURES

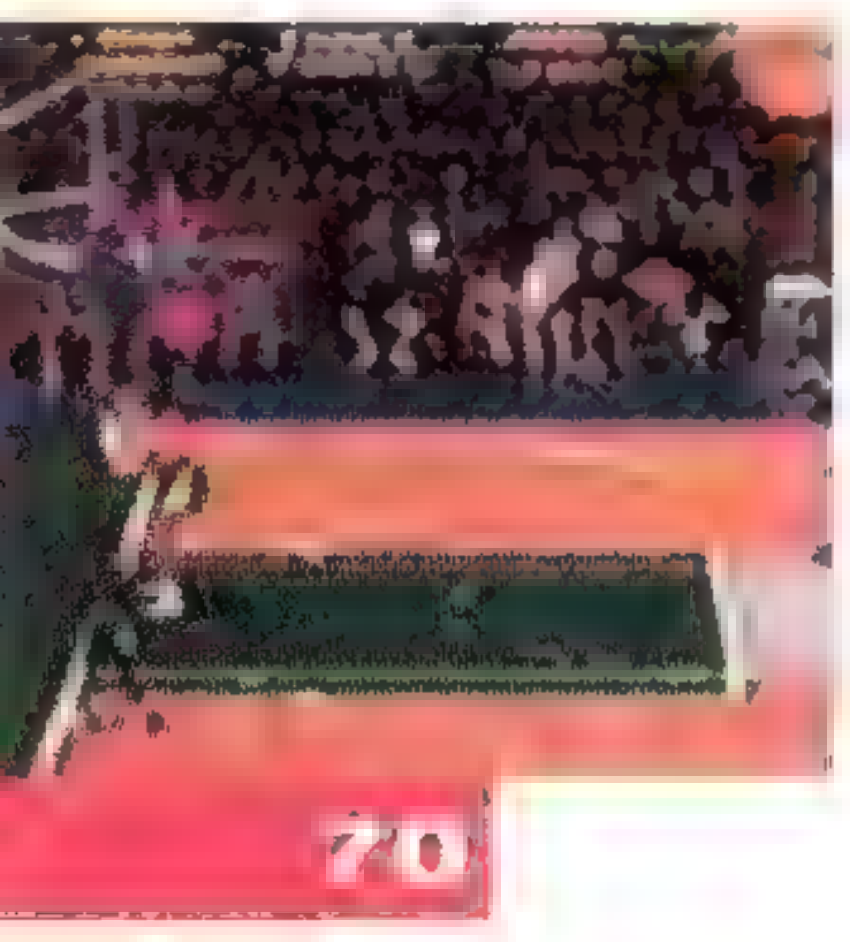
KILLER ROBOTS AND girls in sailor suits, tentacled monsters and butt-kicking babes with really big guns: This, true believer, is the wonderful world of Japanese animation. Those of you who have been schooled in its ways call it by its Japanese name, anime—and you are aware that, through hours spent in dark rooms, eyes a-goggle, sweaty palms clutching the remote control, all that is good and true and beautiful about life itself may be revealed. The following is a nearly-complete guide to anime currently available in America (all of which has been either subtitled or dubbed in English), as well as some shows that aren't, but should be soon. Broken into 11 handy categories, this guide is a bible, if you will, to the pursuit of anime fandom. The path of anime is the path of enlightenment; those who achieve this higher state call themselves, and one another, otaku. Not all of us can ascend to the otaku ranks—but all of us can sit in the flickering glow of our television screens and dream....

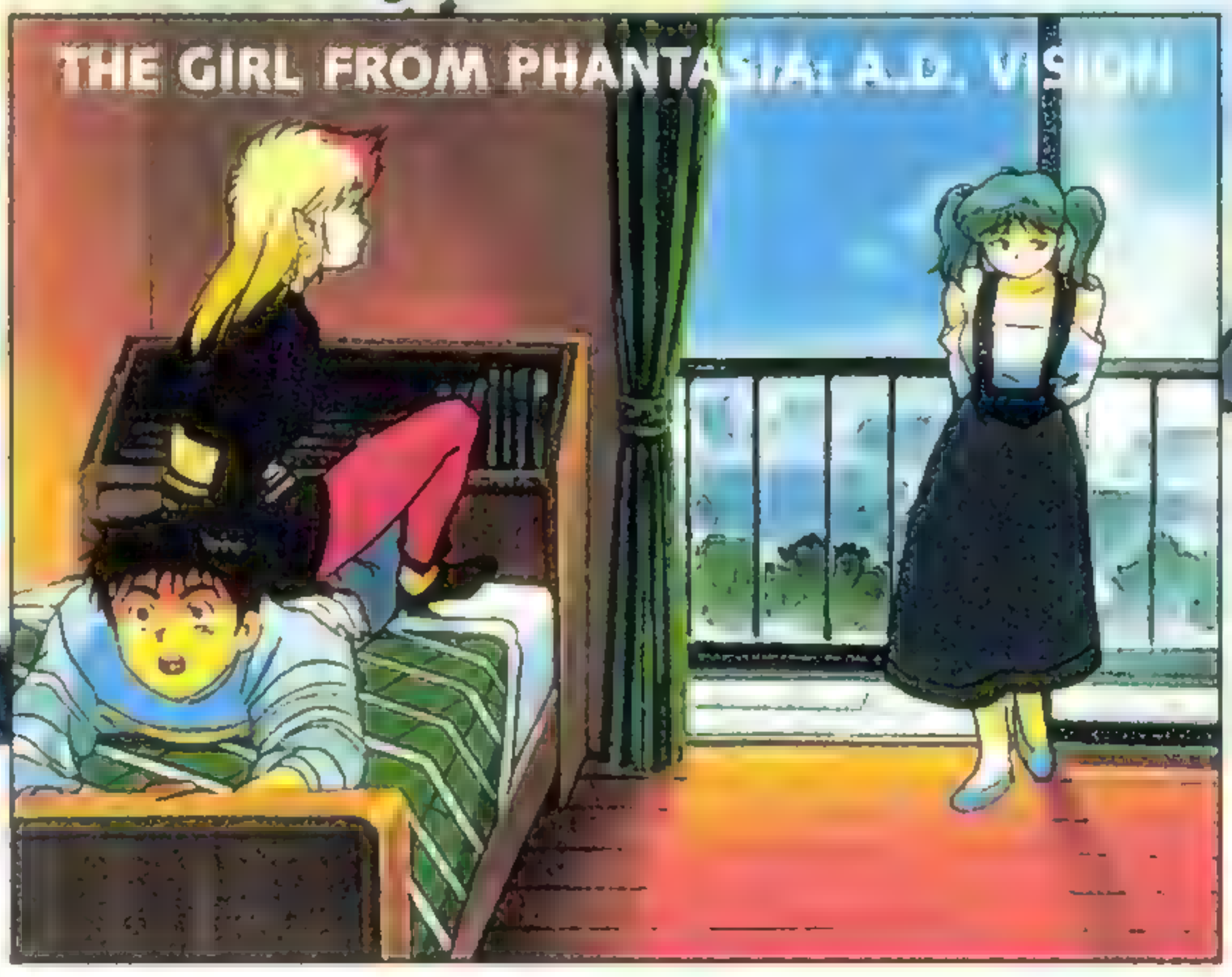
Babes From Heaven

Hapless young men magically (or cybernetically, or whatever) presented with the women of their dreams...or is it nightmares?

THE GIRL FROM PHANTASIA (A.D. VISION)
When a hapless (and undersexed) student acquires a magic carpet, he's pleasantly surprised to find out that it's actually a gateway to another land—and even more so when not one, but two lovely young women emerge from it....
Animation Fair
Rating Sucks

OH MY GODDESS! (ANIMEIGO)
Hapless college student Keiichi, attempting to order take-out Chinese food, accidentally calls Dial-A-Prayer instead. The result: gorgeous "Helping Goddess" Belldandy descends from Heaven to fulfill exactly one of his wishes—which turns out to be for a "beautiful girl like Belldandy" to love him forever. Naturally, the wish is granted...and that's just the beginning. Because Belldandy has two equally hot sisters named Urd and Skuld, when she doesn't come back, they come looking for *her*.
Animation Excellent
Rating Must See




THE GIRL FROM PHANTASIA: A.D. VISION

OUTLANDERS (L.A. HERO)
Hapless human journalist Tetsuya becomes the only thing standing between Earth and alien invasion when the beautiful princess of the destroying horde falls horns-over-heels for him.
Animation Mediocre
Rating Worth Watching

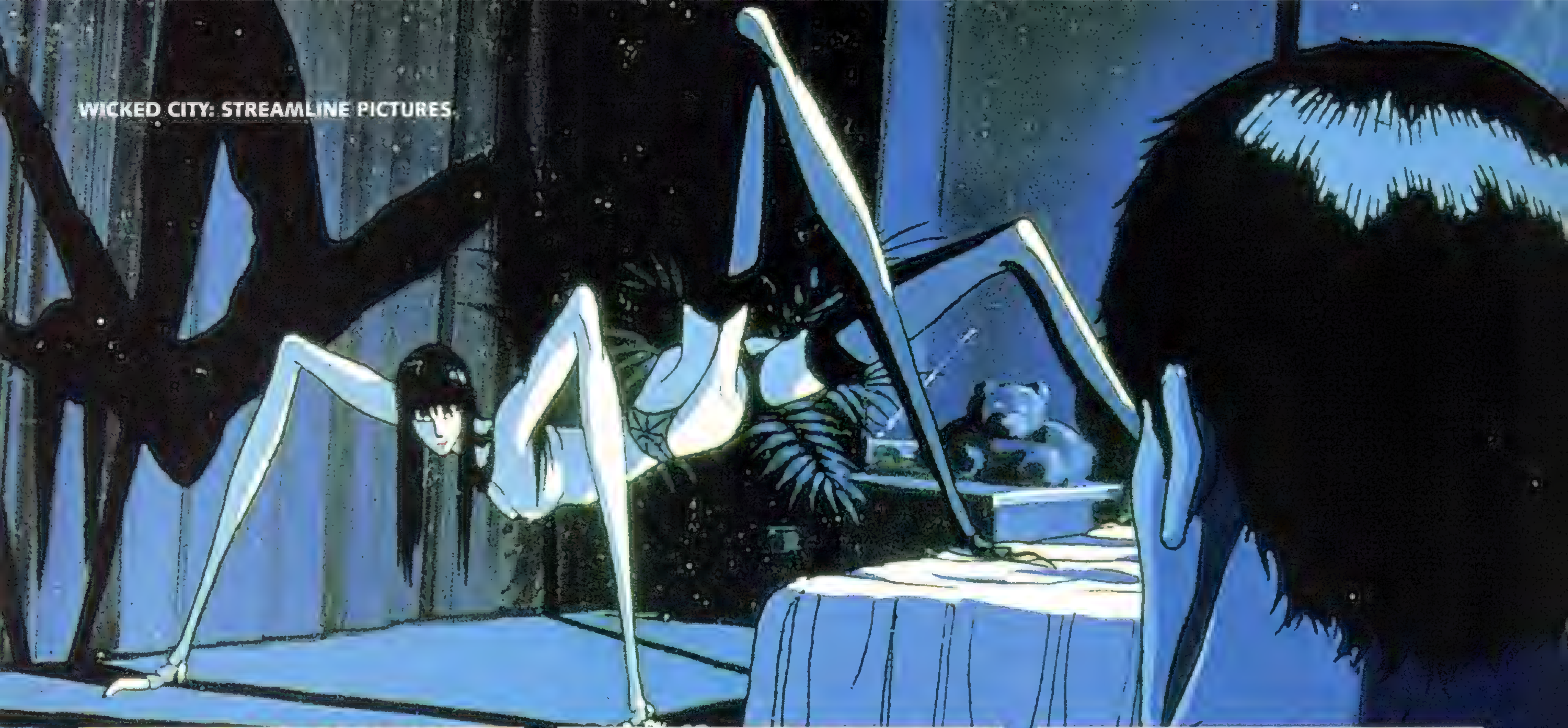
NO NEED FOR TENCHI! (PIONEER)
Hapless high school student Tenchi accidentally releases Ryoko, a sexy female "demon," only to discover that she's actually an imprisoned galactic criminal. Meanwhile, lovely alien princess Aeka, her cute-as-a-button younger sister Sasami, and attractive but moronic space-cop Mihoshi, arrive in hot pursuit. Wild slapstick, clever art direction and memorable characters make this a standout.
Animation Excellent
Rating Must See

URUSEI YATSURA (ANIMEIGO)
Hapless loser Ataru Moroboshi is randomly chosen as Earth's representative in a deadly game of tag; his opponent is a beautiful alien girl named Lum. If he catches her, the Earth is saved; if he doesn't, all is lost. He wins—but in the process, accidentally asks her to marry him. She moves into her "Darling's" bedroom closet, and proceeds to turn his life into a tiger-striped, electrically charged nightmare. This, the first and greatest of all BFH shows, is still one of anime's best-loved creations; a 48-episode TV series and a number of movies and one-shot video specials exist.
Animation Adequate
Rating Must See (*Beautiful Dreamer, Remember My Love*); Worth Watching (TV, OAVs, other movies)

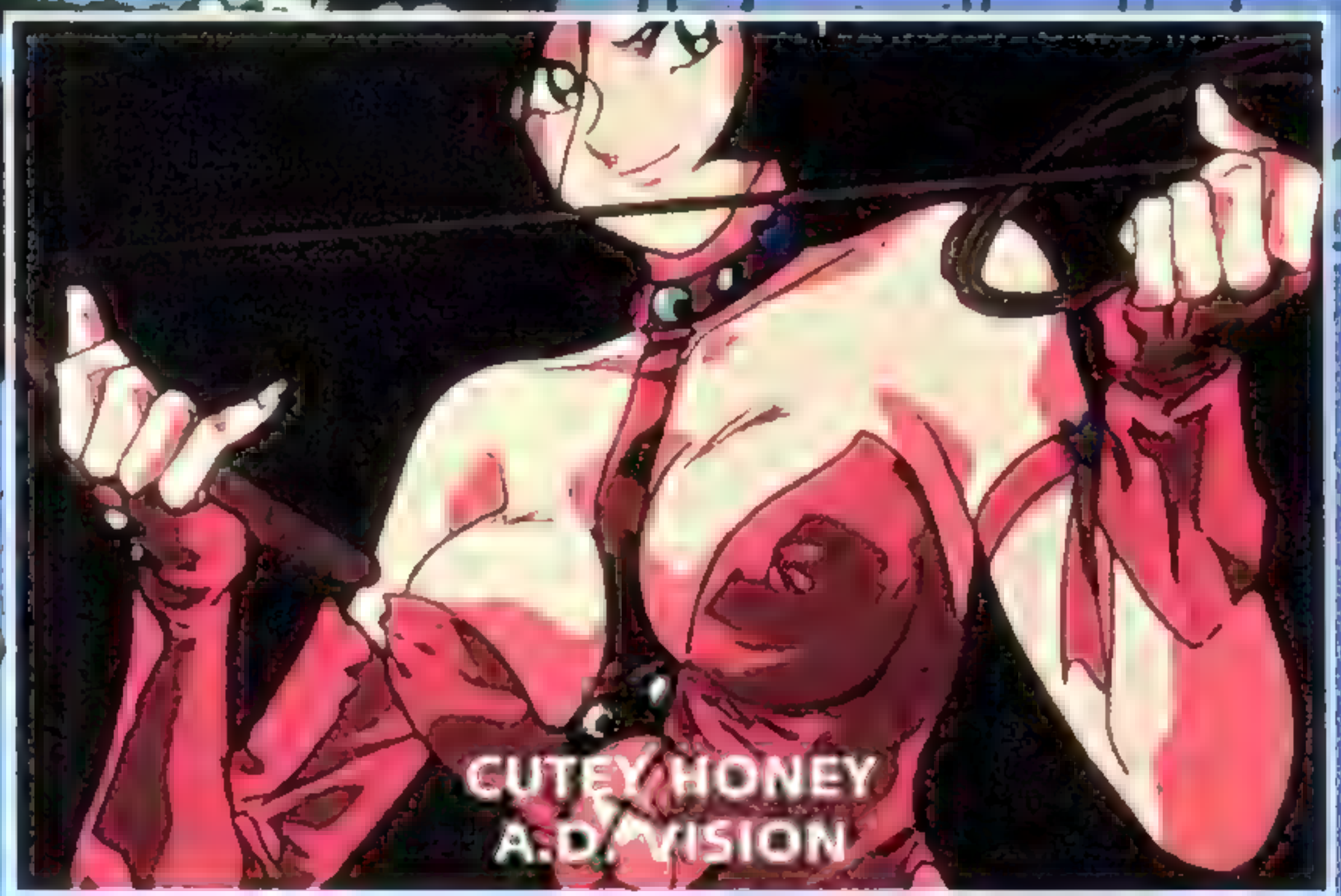
Gals With Guns

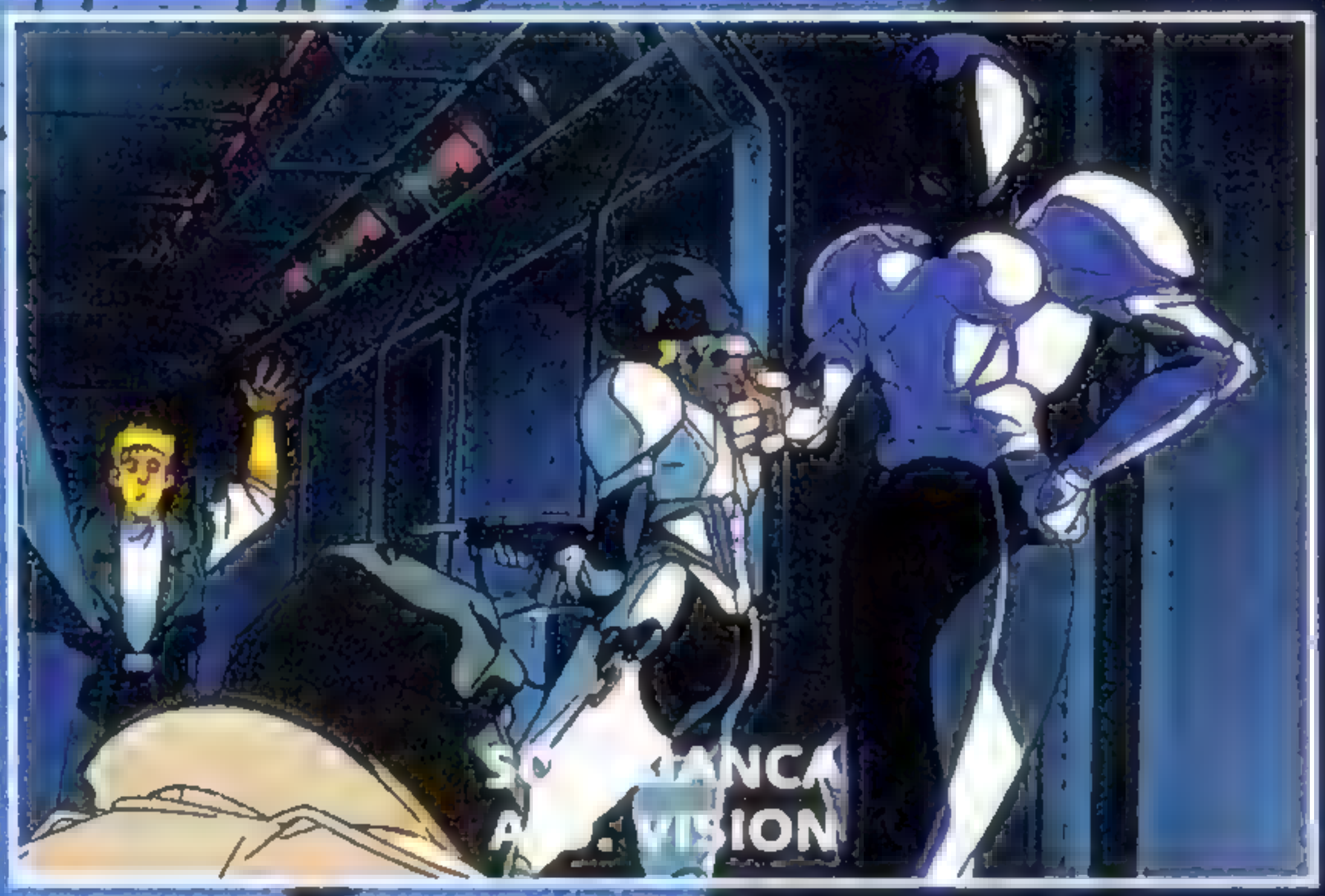
Really hot chicks with really big guns, and—usually—really tight clothing. What more could you ask for?

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS (ANIMEIGO)
In the bleak, cyberpunk future of 2042 A.D., Mega-Tokyo is controlled by the evil Genom Corporation—manufacturers of android servants and soldiers known as "boomers." When a wave of boomer-


WICKED CITY: STREAMLINE PICTURES

BURN-UP A.D. VISION


CUTEY HONEY A.D. VISION


SOL BIANCA A.D. VISION

related destruction begins, a sexy all-girl vigilante force known as the Knight Sabers swings into action, using armored power-suits created by the dead inventor of the boomers themselves.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

BURN UP (A.D. VISION)
Sexy girl-cops attempt to foil a white-slavery ring using—naturally—themselves as bait. If you like high-speed chases, bobbly exposed flesh, and big, big guns, this may be for you. If you like interesting plots or well developed characters, look elsewhere.
Animation: Average
Rating: Sucks

NEW CUTEY HONEY (A.D. VISION)
Cutey Honey, a sexy android babe, exploits her Cutey Powers and ability to transform herself into any number of scantily-clad forms to battle waves of evil creatures.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

DIRTY PAIR (STREAMLINE)
Kei and Yuri are two mismatched (but equally sexy) partners. They fight crime between the stars as the troubleshooting team the "Lovely Angels," but because of the huge swath of destruction they leave behind them, the rest of the universe calls them the "Dirty Pair." A new series of OAVs has just begun in Japan, *Dirty Pair Flash!*, which retells the stories of Kei and Yuri's first and earliest adventures.
Animation: Adequate
Rating: Worth Watching

GALL FORCE (U.S. MANGA CORPS)
Against a backdrop of stars, two alien species battle for control of the galaxy: the sexy, all-female Solnoids, and the grotesque, all-male Paranoids. But while the pawns on the front line fight and die, their leaders have spun a desperate plan to ensure the survival of both species: the creation of a genetic hybrid race, to be seeded on a planet known as Earth. Several inferior sequels—*Rhea Gall Force* and *Gall Force: Earth War*—exist.
Animation: Average
Rating: Worth Watching

PLASTIC LITTLE (A.D. VISION)
The aptly-named Captain Tita, sexy mistress of the good sub Cha Cha Maru, roams the seven seas capturing specialty critters for sale as pets. But when she stumbles upon one of those tiresome plots for world domination, she has no choice but to stop it.
Animation: Average
Rating: Worth Watching

SILENT MOBIUS (STREAMLINE)
In a streamlined future Japan, when the demon brood known as the Lucifer Hawks attempt to breach the dimensional barrier into our reality, only one thing can stop them: the sexy spell-wielding, gun-waving women of the Attacked Mystification Police.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

SOL BIANCA (A.D. VISION)
The galaxy-spanning adventures of space pirates on a super-starship known as the Sol Bianca. They're girls, and—you guessed it—they're sexy.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

Bizarre Love Triangles

He loves her, she loves someone else, or vice versa...comical romance, and romantic comedy, with nutty escapades galore.

KIMAGURE ORANGE ROAD (ANIMEIGO)
Young Kyosuke is forced to choose between two lovely girls—the dark-haired, mysterious Madoka and the cute, blonde, but incredibly shrill Hikaru. The twist: neither of them know that he comes from a family of psychically gifted ESPers. A favorite and a classic.
Animation: Average
Rating: Worth Watching

RANMA 1/2 (VIZ VIDEO)
Martial artist Ranma Saotome has returned from a training trip to China with an unusual problem: whenever he's splashed by cold water, he turns into a cute, red-headed girl. It takes hot water to revert him to his "normal" self. Add a similarly cursed father who turns into a panda, a rival who turns into a pig, and a tomboy fiancee who thinks Ranma is a nuisance in both forms, and you get one of anime's contemporary classics—sexy, slap-happy, hilariously funny and yes, romantic.
Animation: Average (TV); Mediocre (movies and OAVs)
Rating: Must See (TV and OAVs), Worth Watching (movies)

Post-apocalypse Now

After the big bang, or the ultimate conflict, or the heat death of the universe, or the takeover of society by Big Brother...what's left? Generally a Hero Bucking The System And Trying To Find Peace And Order In A World Gone Mad type of thing.

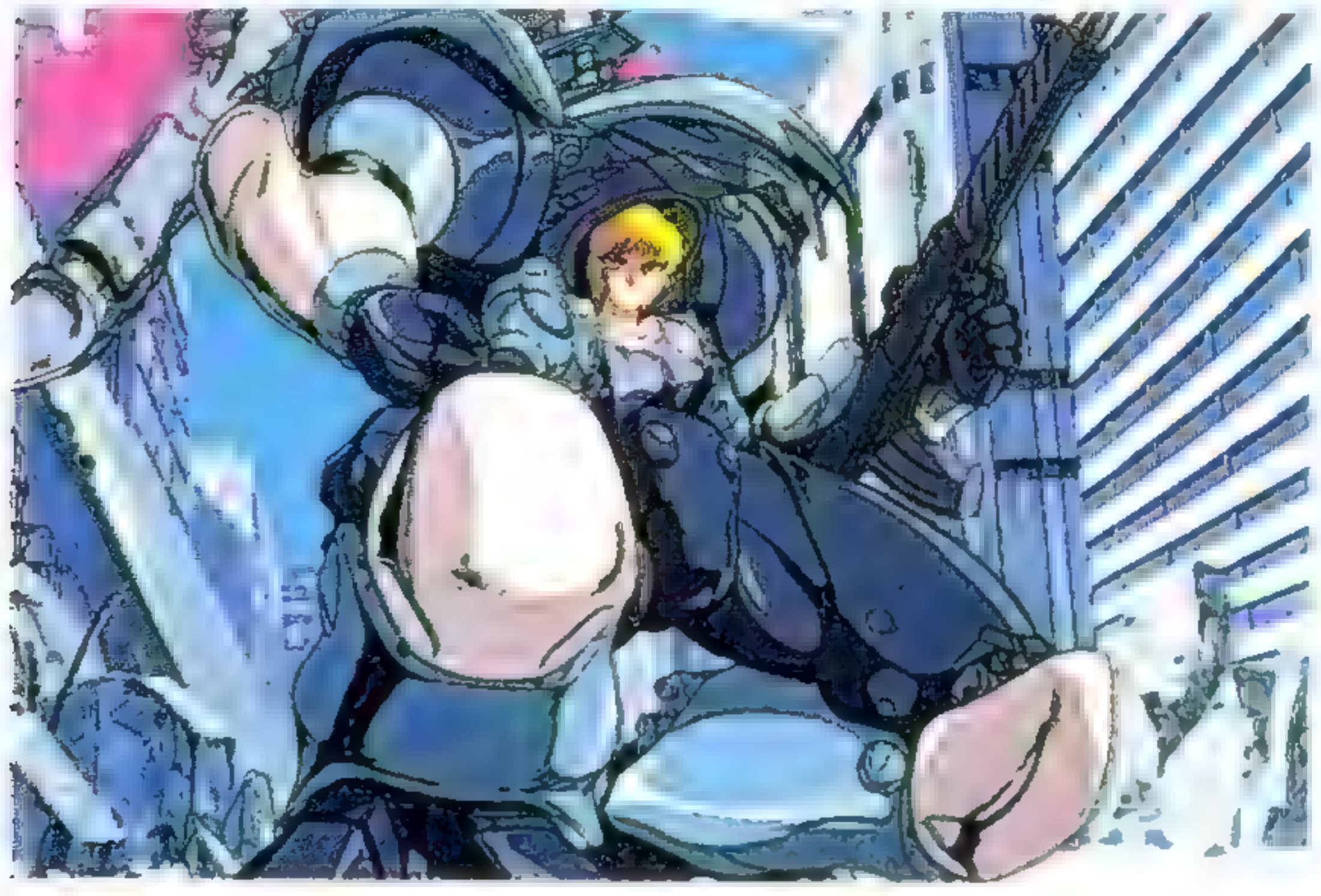
A.D. POLICE (ANIMEIGO)
Set in the same nightmare future as the *Bubblegum Crisis* series, *A.D. Police* focuses not on the lithe armored babes of the Knight Sabers but on the grounded grunts of the A.D. Police, who serve as cannon fodder in the war against the boomer menace. Gory effects and a tone so dark it's almost stomach-turning make this noir cyberpunk nightmare worth watching, despite the absence of the aforementioned babes.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

AKIRA (STREAMLINE)
For most modern anime fans, this is where it all began: a harsh, epic tale of the terrible potential that lies untapped in humanity's genes and minds. Biker boy Tetsuo is kidnapped by the government of post-nuke Japan and subjected to experiments designed to unleash his psychic ability. They succeed—but in the process, he becomes a monster. He storms through

NeoTokyo on a collision course with the first recipient of these wild mental gifts, the being known as Akira. And only his former friend, the biker boy Kaneda, can stop him.
Animation: Insanely great
Rating: Must See

APPLESEED (MANGA ENTERTAINMENT)

Think of it as a latter-day *Lassie*, except instead of a boy and his dog, you have a girl and her cyborg. Deunan and Briareos are partners in a post-holocaust police force, fighting futuristic terrorists who want to start a war between humans and the half-machine bioroids.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching



BATTLE ANGEL (A.D. VISION)

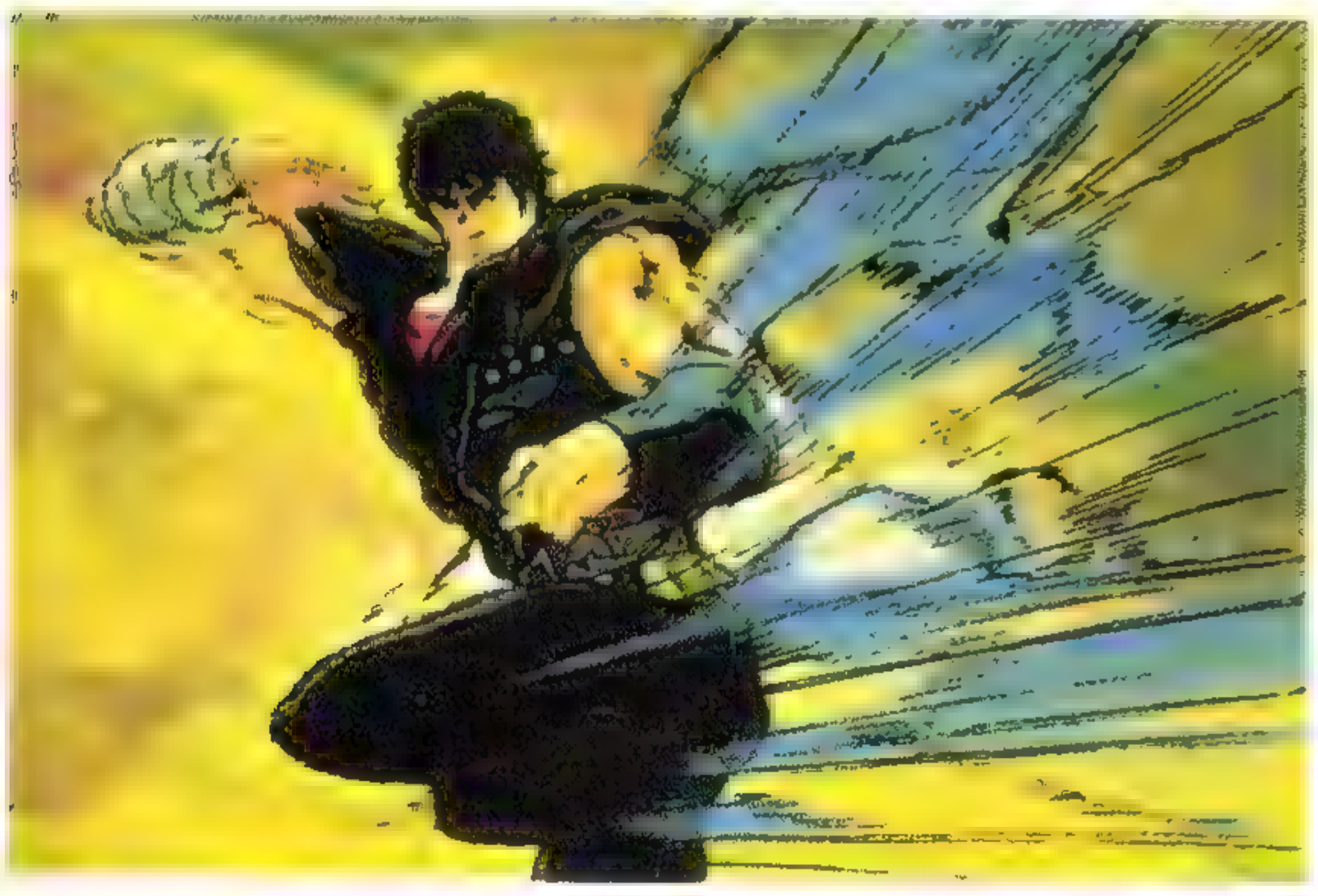
Above the earth hangs Zeram, the city in the sky, where humanity's artists, scientists, and intellects dwell. The surface below crawls with mutants and half-machine monsters, who live only to kill and cannibalize the organs of others. Ido, an exile from Zeram, uses his mechanical skills to resurrect a lovely young cyborg named Gally, only to find that she is much more—and much deadlier—than her shape reveals. And when Gally fights for the people she loves, no one had better get in her way.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Must See

DOMINION (U.S. MANGA)

In the polluted far future, crime is unstoppable and clean genes are a treasure. So when a mutant gang goes on a rampage, it's up to the Tank Police—a nutty bunch of violence-happy Keystone Kops—to stop them. Unfortunately, the plots and characters have holes big enough for all of the Tank Police to drive through sideways, but the evil Puma Sisters walk around almost naked, so you may not care.
Animation: Average
Rating: Sucks

FIST OF THE NORTH STAR (STREAMLINE)

Guys with really big bodies and tiny little heads fight each other on the face of an earth transformed into a lifeless wasteland. Lots of blood, exploding bodies, and severed limbs make this a real gorefest; too grim for many tastes, and basically an ugly film with a sappy ending.
Animation: Horrible
Rating: Sucks



GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

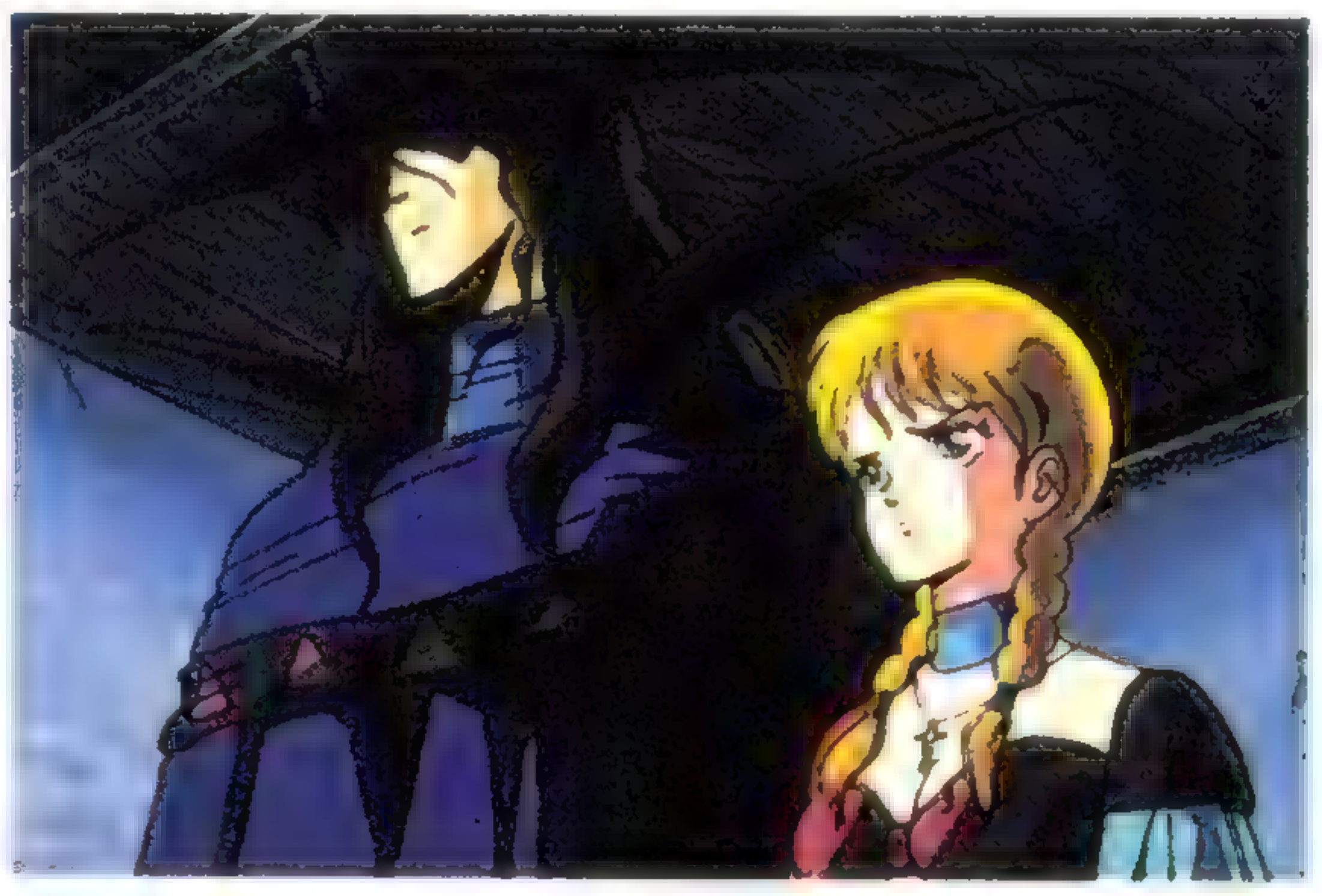
Ital, an innocent young man brought up alone in the deep desert, must learn the true secret of his—and humanity's—potential. And lovely junk-hunter Sahari is just the person to help him find discover it.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF THE WINDS (STREAMLINE)

One of the true classics of anime, Hayao Miyazaki's epic story of an earth where nature has become man's enemy—and of Nausicaa, the lovely young princess who learns how to befriend it again—is actually so good that you'll forgive its preachy eco-sensitive tone.
Animation: Incredible
Rating: Must See

VAMPIRE HUNTER D (STREAMLINE)

In a post-nuclear world where the supernatural has once more risen to power, an evil creature of the dark terrorizes a small village, demanding tribute in blood. All seems lost—until an eerie traveler arrives, and vows to save the town and slay its overlord.
Animation: Weird and excellent
Rating: Must See



A WIND NAMED AMNESIA (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

The Earth has been swept by a strange wind that causes humanity to forget...everything. All language, all knowledge, all science is lost in an instant—and civilization collapses. Years later, a young man and woman who have been miraculously spared this memory loss travel across America on a journey to rediscover the secrets of the past.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

Supergirls

Woman warriors, magically delicious sorcerers, and robot chicks, all stronger than you and better looking.

PROJECT A-KO (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

Possibly one of the weirdest and funniest anime shows around, *Project A-ko* centers on the misadventures of an incredibly strong girl named, natch, A-ko (the reason for her strength is revealed in the last scene of the first OAV, and American fans will appreciate the joke) and her best pal C-ko, who may or may not be an alien princess. Meanwhile, B-ko, A-ko's arch-rival, plots to steal C-ko's friendship...over A-ko's dead body. Subtle and not-so-subtle parodies, as well as cameo appearances of characters from other series, are sprinkled throughout.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

ICZER 1 & ICZER 3 (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

What the hell is an Iczer? Doesn't matter; in these two series, "Iczer" is apparently a cute alien warrior woman sent to Earth to defend mankind from the alien menaces of something called Big Gold. Iczer 1, who stars in the first series, is the first of her kind; Iczer 3, who appears in the second, is her younger sister. Both require a cute human girl partner to bring out their full fighting potential. Why? Who knows? Who cares?
Animation: Mediocre
Rating: Sucks

PRETTY SOLDIER SAILOR MOON (FOX TV)

Possibly the scariest thing to come out of Japan since Godzilla, *Sailor Moon* is about Usagi, a moronic high school girl who is given magical fighting powers in order to battle the otherworldly demons of Queen Beryl. Now, with a wave of her wand, she becomes Sailor Moon. Despite the fact that this is very clearly a show for teenage girls, Moon's transformation scene, which involves her spinning around until she's butt-naked and then gradually being enveloped in a tight-fitting sailor suit with a tiny miniskirt, has captured the imaginations of young men all across Japan. And—hold on to your power wands—it's comin' our way, via a highly edited, English dubbed version to air on Fox TV.
Animation: Mediocre
Rating: Sucks

3X3 EYES (STREAMLINE)

Yakumo is an orphan boy struggling through life on his own, until he meets Pai, a strange Chinese girl bearing a letter from his dead father. Pai turns out to be the last of the Sanjiyans, an immortal race of magical three-eyed beings whom Yakumo's father discovered. Her quest: to become mortal, and human. But before Yakumo and Pai can set out on their journey, Yakumo is killed—and Pai knows only one way to save him: make him her Wuu, or soul-servant. A weird mark appears on Yakumo's forehead, and he finds that, regardless of how badly he's hurt, he quickly regenerates. Which has its pros and cons....
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO (A.D. VISION)

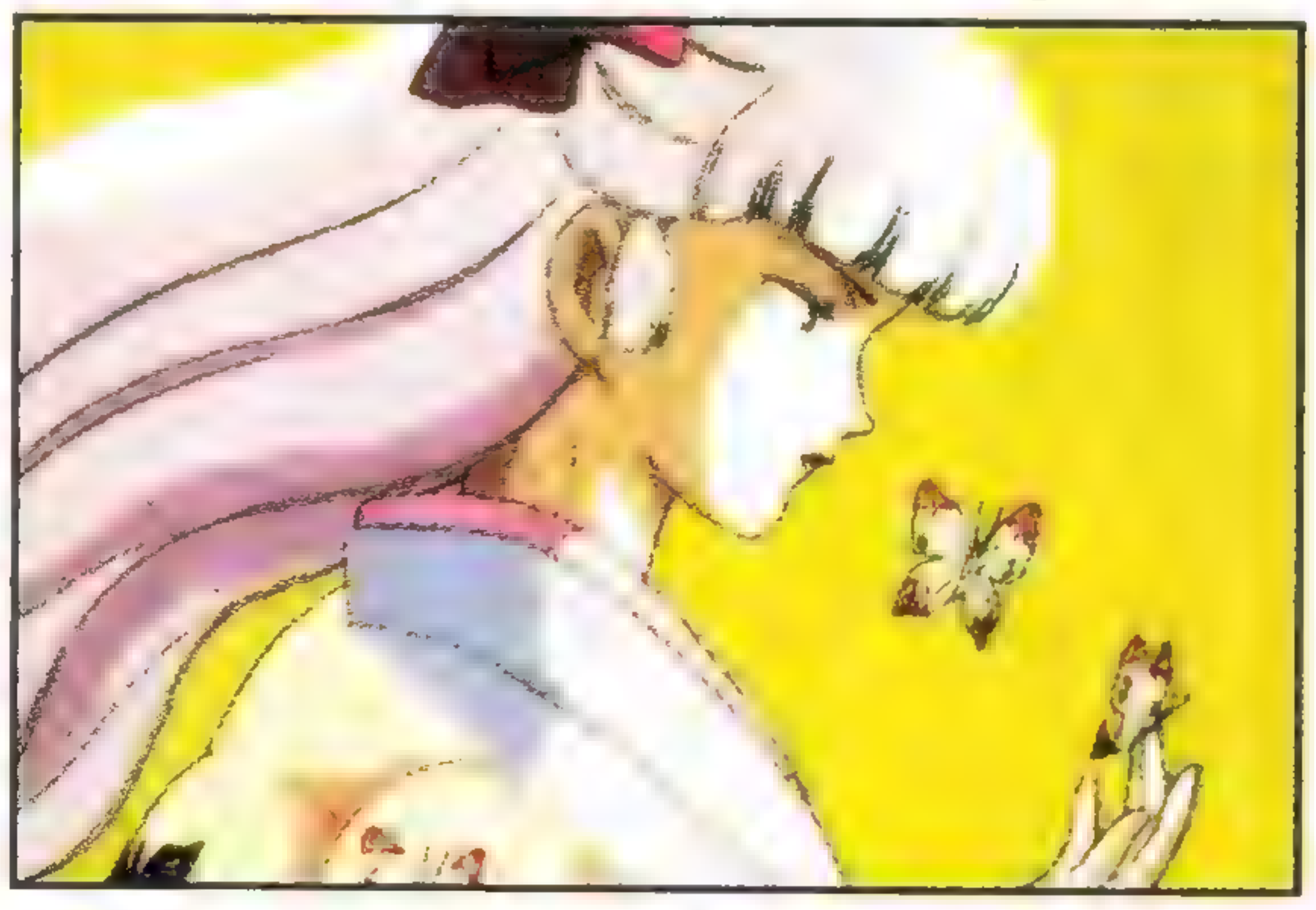
Yohko Mano is an average teenage girl with an above-average interest in guys. But when her grandmother reveals that Yohko is the last in a long line of Devil Hunters, the spiritual guardians of mankind, Yohko gives up boy-chasing and begins ghost-busting instead. A nudie transformation sequence and a skin-tight outfit (which gets ripped off fairly frequently anyway) make *DHY* a real crowd-pleaser.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

MARIS THE CHOJO (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

Maris is a space cop who knows her own strength too well: without special body restraints, she accidentally breaks doors, smashes desks, and destroys her own patrol ships. But all this costs money—the one thing Maris doesn't have. With her partner, a little nine-tailed fox, she spans the space ways solving crimes and looking for that one big score. Don't miss the hilarious "blooper" reel that runs under the end credits!
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

MERMAID FOREST & MERMAID'S SCAR (U.S. MANGA/VIZ VIDEO)

Legend has it that if you eat the flesh of a mermaid, you'll live forever. Yuta is a sailor who has discovered this legend to be true—and who's searching for someone else to share his eternal travels. He finds Mana, a very odd girl who has been sheltered since her birth by an even odder group of old women.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching



VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU (ANIMEIGO)

A slow, surreal journey through a weird supernatural world just beneath our own reality. Miyu is a girl of strange, dark powers who saves—or is it destroys?—young men. A beautiful occult investigator begins to track her down. But there's more to the story than meets the eye.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Worth Watching

armored Threats

Robots and powered suits and the men and women who love them.

BLACK MAGIC M-66 (U.S. RENDITIONS)
What happens when the ultimate fighting machine is released...and its target is the young daughter of its inventor? This video, that's what.
Animation: Very Good
Rating: Worth Watching

DETONATOR ORGUN (U.S. MANGA CORPS)
A quiet young college student is catapulted into a battle for humanity's survival when he bonds with a suit of alien armor: Orgun.
Animation: Good
Rating: Sucks

GENOCYBER (U.S. MANGA)
Intricate, ghastly bio-technological designs make this girl-meets-armor story unique. A pair of twin sisters are bonded by a psychic link and a terrible hatred—but when they combine forces, the secret of Genocyber, the ultimate weapon, is revealed.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Worth Watching

GIANT ROBO (L.A. HERO)
Daisaku is a young boy with a very good friend—the all-powerful robot Giant Robo. He and his cybernetic pal work with a team of similarly supernormal agents as part of a secret organization dedicated to stopping the terrorist villain gang Big Fire. A loose remake of the live-action *Johnny Sakko And His Flying Robot*, *Robo* is a throwback to the classic days of anime—when boys were boys and robots were really, really big.
Animation: Stunning
Rating: Must See

GUNBUSTER (U.S. RENDITIONS)
More giant robot action, this time with cute girls at the helm. Noriko Star is the awkward (but cute) daughter of a slain space captain; determined to follow her father's legacy, she perseveres against the laughter of her peers—and eventually becomes the key to mankind's salvation, as the only person capable of piloting Gunbuster. Don't touch that vertical hold: apparently, the animators of *Gunbuster* believe that, in the future, girls will no longer wear bras.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

THE GUYVER (U.S. MANGA CORPS)
A bleak, noiresque story of power and responsibility, as a young man accidentally stumbles upon the Guyver, a suit of organic alien armor that gives him strange new abilities. But other people want the Guyver too, and he's the only thing standing in their way.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

MOLDIVER (PIONEER)
A super-scientist creates a super-suit of armor, the Moldiver; his bimbo sister changes its programming code so that, when it bursts into being, it's not a sleek and deadly killing outfit, but a cute sailor suit with a miniskirt and a pastel helmet. After the scientist attempts to use Moldiver—to hilarious results—he throws up his hands and turns the suit over to his sister, who begins a never-ending fight against crime and bad hair days.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

PATLABOR (MANGA ENTERTAINMENT)
Noa Izumi is a cute, red-headed tomboy whose greatest passion is robots—the bigger, the better. When the opportunity comes for her to join the Patrol Labor unit—a special police team that fights android crime with giant robots known as labors—it's a dream come true.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

HADES PROJECT ZEORYMER (U.S. MANGA CORPS)
A young man suddenly discovers that the life he's led, the family he's always called his own, and the identity he's never questioned are all utterly false when he's whisked away by mysterious strangers. They tell him that his existence thus far has been nothing more than preparation for his true destiny: to pilot the incredible robot known as Zeorymer as part of a plot to rule the world—or destroy it.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Worth Watching

Gangsta Gangsta

Crime stories with a dark and bitter edge, or a weird and wacky spin.

CRYING FREEMAN (STREAMLINE)
Freeman has been reared from birth to be the perfect man, and the perfect assassin. He's the yakuza's secret weapon, but inside, every death he causes rips at his soul; his tears of sadness have given him his nickname.
Animation: Amazing
Rating: Worth Watching

GOLGO 13: THE PROFESSIONAL (STREAMLINE)
Golgo, who took his name from Golgotha, the mountain where Jesus died, is a cruel, grim man with a streak of justice in his heart. But he's all business—and his business is murder.
Animation: Average
Rating: Worth Watching

LUPIN III (STREAMLINE)
The grandson of the infamous French thief spends his days plotting his next heist and running from the long-suffering Inspector Zenagata, as well as saving the occasional damsel in distress and foiling the odd plot for world domination. Classic wacky kops n' robberz humor by Hayao Miyazaki, the grand master of Japanese animation.
Animation: Good
Rating: Must See (movie) to Worth Watching (OAVs)

RIDING BEAN (ANIMEIGO)
Forget that wuss Speed Racer; Bean Bandit is the real king of the road. Capable of walking away from a killer crash (or a nuclear blast) unharmed, he and his trigger-happy partner Rally ride the highways of Chicago, delivering the undeliverable (from dirty money to hostages) and staying one step ahead of the law. But when it all comes down, Bean isn't just a crook—he's a crook with heart.
Animation: Very Good
Rating: Must See

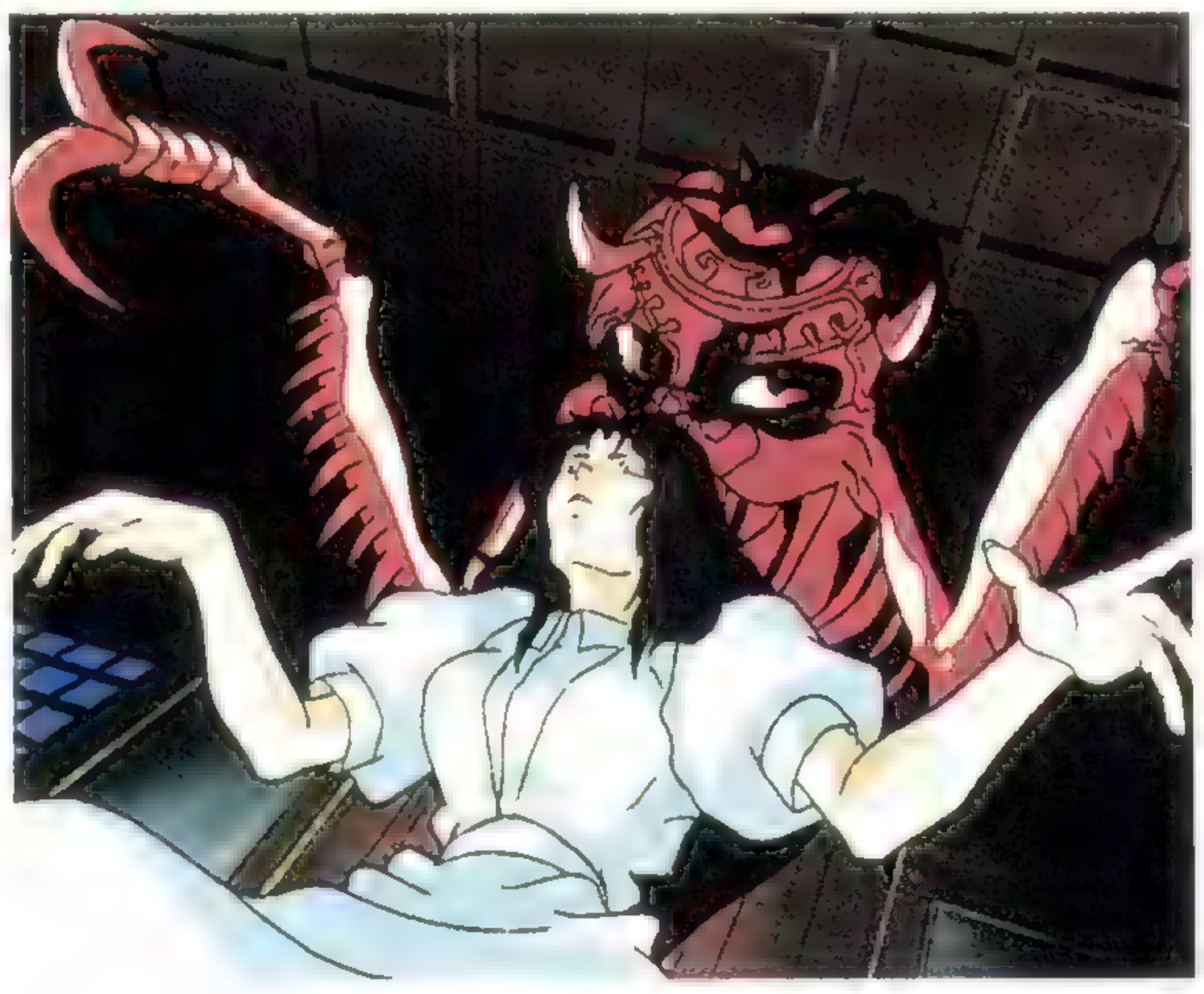
Tentacles from Hell

Supernatural horrors reaching across dimensions to corrupt the innocent and steal the souls of the unwary! And most of them have tentacles!

DEMON CITY SHINJUKU (U.S. MANGA CORPS)
Tokyo goes to hell when a dark fiend named Levih Rah opens a gate to the nether world right in the center of Shinjuku, the nightclub district. A pair of teens and a surly mystic try to defeat him.
Animation: Good
Rating: Sucks

DEVILMAN (L.A. HERO)
Go Nagai, legendary creator of Mazinger (and thus the grandfather of all Badass Robot cartoons), also drew the original manga for this series—about a young boy possessed by a demon who, due to the pureness of his heart, is able to turn the tables on the fiend and become Devilman—a superhero with the powers of Hell itself.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS (STREAMLINE)
An epic tale of struggle against the forces of evil, in the form of a sorcerer who seeks to awake the dragon demon that sleeps beneath the Tokyo subway system through the sacrifice of a virginal girl.
Animation: Very Good
Rating: Worth Watching



GUY (A.D. VISION)
After being thrust into the bowels of a hellish prison planet, a space pirate named Guy is attacked—and infected—by a grotesque beast. When he's aroused, he transforms into a similar creature—and this certainly has its share of advantages, like super strength and invulnerability. Meanwhile, Guy's teenage girl companion has an amazing propensity to lose her clothes.
Animation: Fair
Rating: Sucks

URUTSOKIDOJI (U.S. MANGA)
The mother of all tentacle porn epics, *Urutsokidoji*, also known as *The Wandering Kid* or *Legend Of The Overfiend*, follows the adventures of Amanojaku and his sister Akemi, both of whom are from the world of the Beast-Men—a dimension that exists between Hell and Earth. They're seeking a mythic messiah known as the Overfiend, who will unify the three frames and create an empire of peace and harmony. R-r-right. Lots of disgusting limb-severing and torso-exploding, not to mention multiple episodes of violent rape by and of teenagers, multi-tentacled critters, demons, and asso-

ciated bystanders. Infamous for its sheer explicitness.
Animation: Mediocre
Rating: Sucks

WICKED CITY (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

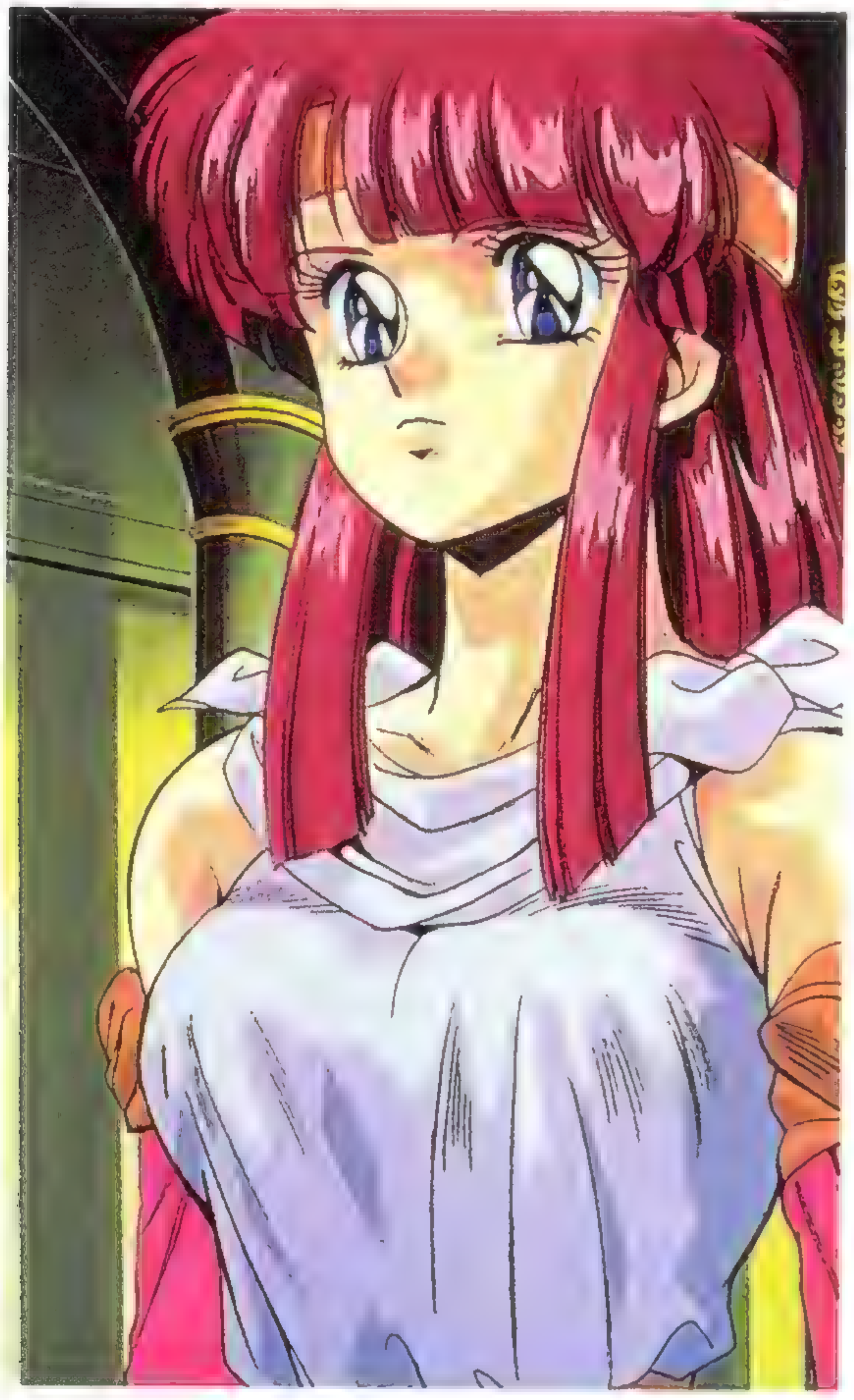
Another tale of demons and dimensional conflict. This time, however, the plot revolves around diplomacy rather than warfare; humanity and the Netherworlders have forged an uneasy truce. A human male and a demon female—both trained as agent/assassins—are forced to serve as partners, guarding the ancient sorcerer who brokered this peace...but first, in the tradition of odd-couple teamups, they have to get over their mutual loathing.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

Lust Never Sleeps

Dirty stuff for fans of cartoon sexcapades, particularly involving young women in sailor suits.

DRAGON KNIGHT (A.D. VISION)

A young knight sets out to save beautiful damsels held hostage by an army of demons, but who's going to save them from him?
Animation: Sucks
Rating: Sucks



DRAGON PINK (A.D. VISION)

Not to be confused with A.D.'s other medieval title, as this is about a slave girl named Pink who's donned a pair of magical cursed panties that make her hotter than a dragon's breath. Then again, since this show is basically about naked cartoon babes having sex, plot descriptions seem almost irrelevant.
Animation: Lousy
Rating: Sucks

END OF SUMMER (A.D. VISION)

High school romance with an X-rated twist as a young boy named Wataru discovers this crazy little thing called sex. Is this about "coming of age" or just about "cuming?" Looks nice, but pretty mediocre unless you've got this thing for young cartoon girls.
Animation: Good
Rating: Sucks

MAGICAL TWILIGHT (A.D. VISION)

A cute witch who likes guys with big...broomsticks on a magical mystery prowl for action.
Animation: Average Rating: Sucks

REI REI (A.D. VISION)

Kaguya is the Missionary of Love, a gorgeous goddess who saves lonely young men from lives of frustrated misery by cradling them against her huge naked breasts and using magic powers. Not as dumb as it sounds.
Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

U-JIN BRAND (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

A trilogy of sex stories from the pen of Japanese comic artist U-jin. The latter two feature a hero who rapes girls for hire, to teach them a lesson in love. Utterly grotesque, and completely unwatchable.
Animation: Average
Rating: Sucks

Angst In Space

Journeys to go where no man has gone before; deep space conflicts between alien races; invasions of our galaxy by monsters of the bug-eyed variety.

CAPTAIN HARLOCK (ANIMEIGO)

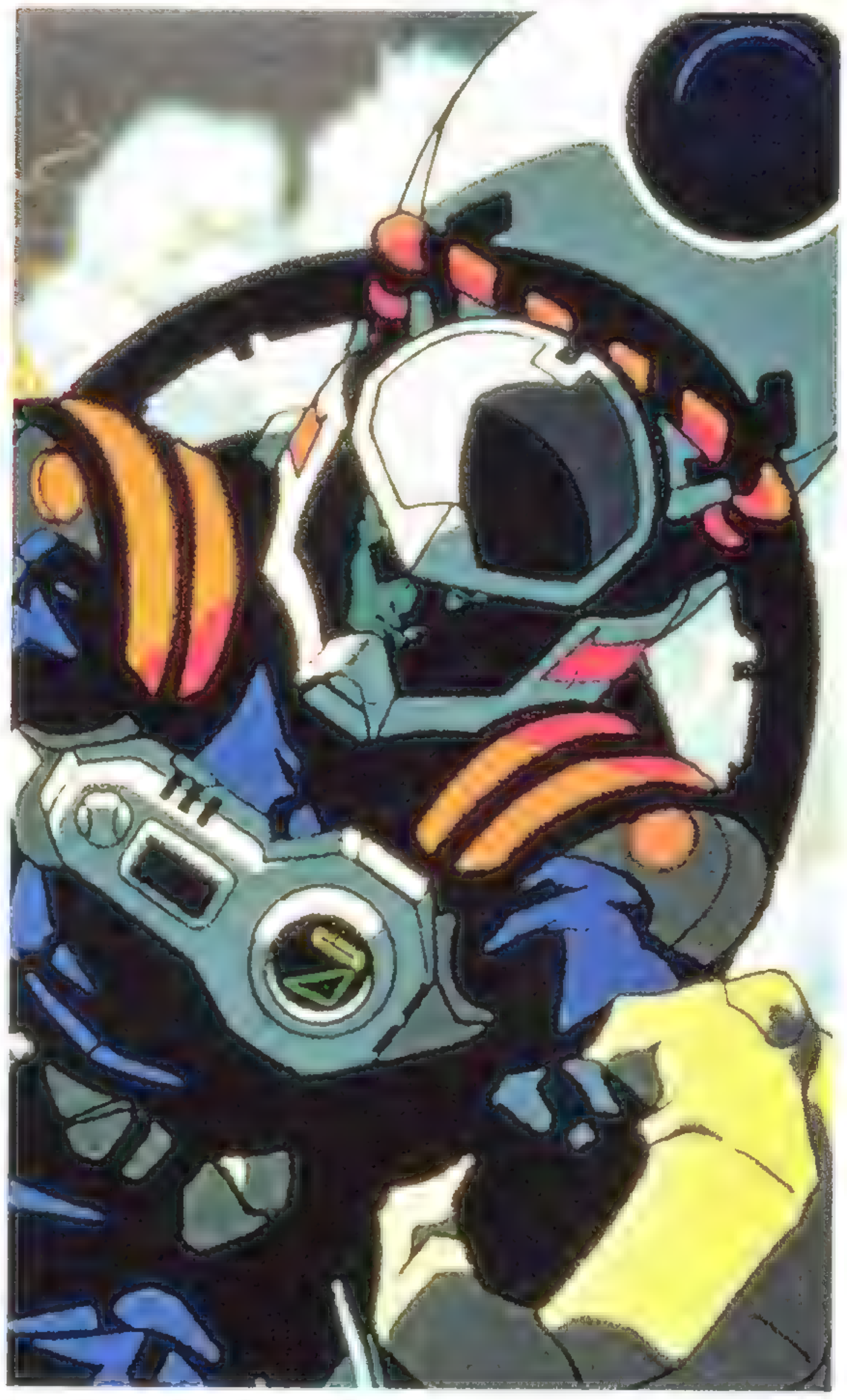
The moody adventures of a depressive space pirate with one eye. One of the classic space-operas, full of tragic melodrama and fierce action.
Animation: Average
Rating: Worth Watching

MACROSS (STREAMLINE)

The basis for *Robotech*, the series you loved on TV as a kid, *Macross* is the epic story of humanity's battle against the alien Zentraedi. Action, drama, starships, zap guns, bimbo pop singers—you name it, Macross has it. A sequel, *Macross II*, was released recently with great fanfare; see below for another even newer sequel, *Macross Plus*.
Animation: Good
Rating: Must See

MACROSS PLUS (MANGA ENTERTAINMENT)

This sequel-of-sorts follows the tale of Isamu Dyson, your typical rebellious space-jockey assigned to test pilot a brand new, cutting-edge fighter ship. But little does he know that his ragged past—and a very strange future—will soon be catching up to him....



Animation: Good
Rating: Worth Watching

LENSMAN (STREAMLINE)

Adapted from E.E. "Doc" Smith, this is the story of the Lensmen, a space patrol who fight an alien horde with the help of the strange weapon known as the Lens. Unfortunately, repeated watchings still won't give you any clue as to what's going on. A good idea ruined by dopey execution.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Sucks

SUPER DIMENSIONAL CENTURY ORGUSS (L.A. HERO)

More space action in the style of Macross, this time featuring the crew of the good ship Glomar. A sequel OAV series set two centuries after the first, Orguss 02, has just been released—with, of course, all new situations and all new characters.
Animation: Good
Ratings: Worth Watching

Not Just Kid Stuff

Something different—children's classics and grown-up features, enjoyable by everyone despite the absence of good old-fashioned sex and violence.

GRAVE OF THE FIREFLIES (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

Perhaps the most heart-wrenching animated film ever created—yes! Sadder than even *Bambi* and *Charlotte's Web*!—this semi-historical tale of a boy and his sister trying to survive on their own in the aftermath of the mass firebombing of Japan during World War II is a far cry from the girls, guns, and go-bots that anime is best known for, and well worth the effort to find.
Animation: Incredible
Rating: Must See

THE WINGS OF HONNEAMISE (MANGA ENTERTAINMENT)

A gloriously-rendered space odyssey retelling the story of the conquest of space, with a gently warped sense of history. What if an utterly different technology ruled during the drive to reach beyond the Earth? Would man's desire to press the outer limits, the far frontiers, be any different? The answer, of course, is not a chance—and the stirring, sentimental, but deeply exciting story of *Wings*, combined with beautiful animation and orchestral sound, is proof of this. A fan favorite that many claim is among the greatest works of Japanese animation.
Animation: Excellent
Rating: Must See

NADIA (STREAMLINE)

A Steam Age masterpiece in the style of Jules Verne, Nadia is a strange girl with no memory of her childhood, discovered and befriended by Jean, a young French lad who hopes someday to become an inventor. Nadia's prize possession is a huge blue gem, the Blue Water; over the course of their adventures, the pair travel by submarine to worlds beneath the waves and islands across the sea, run up against villains like the lovely Grandis and her two henchmen, and ultimately discover the secret of Nadia—and of the Blue Water.
Animation: Very Good
Rating: Worth Watching

MY NEIGHBOR TOTORO (TROMA/FOX)

The most beloved of all of Miyazaki's classics, *Totoro* is about the blossoming friendship between two young girls (whose hospitalized mother is critically ill) and a large, furry spirit of the forest. Whimsical animation and some of the most ear-catching music in animation make this a masterpiece for kids and adults, and yeah, even teens.
Animation: Delightful
Rating: Must See

TWILIGHT OF THE COCKROACHES (U.S. MANGA CORPS)

One of the weirdest feature films to emerge from the anime industry, *Twilight* combines live footage with hysterically clever animation to tell the story of how a community of roaches reacts to the encroachment of their turf—a messy bachelor's den—by a young, incredibly neat new girlfriend.
Animation: Hilariously great
Rating: Must See

continued from pg. 64

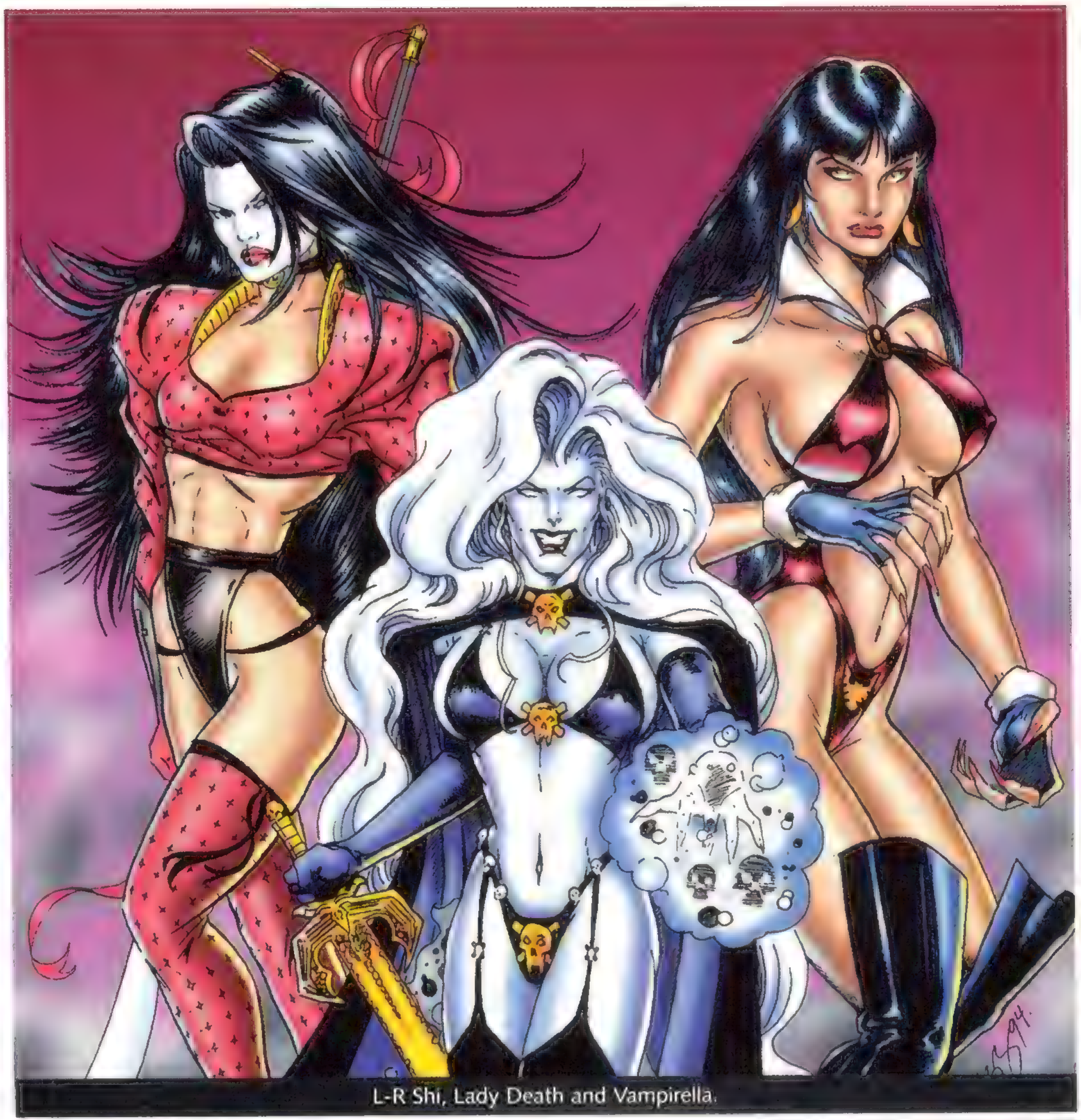
comic book babe simply because she's much more than just a babe.

"Shi doesn't have big breasts," says Tucci. "Shi doesn't walk around in a thong or high heels—she's not sleazy. That's not what my book is really about. I try to write a sophisticated book, something that both men and women can really enjoy."

Along with Lady Death and Vampirella, Shi has become one of comics' most in-demand titles. And because of his prize character's recent mainstream success, Tucci has enjoyed his share of fringe benefits.

"Buzz and I were driving down the New Jersey Turnpike and we got pulled over by a state trooper," says Tucci. "I was doing like 120 miles an hour. The trooper asked where we were going in such a hurry, and we told him a comic convention. He asked what comic books we did, and I told him *Shi* and Buzz said *Vampirella*. The cop was all excited. We had some comics in the car, so we each gave him signed copies of our book, and he let us off. He waved his buddy on, another cop came and we gave him comics too!"

[*Ed. note—Does your copy of FLUX #4 have* Mortal Kombat III *on the cover? That's because you have the newsstand edition. If you want to see our exclusive Lady Death, Shi and Vampirella alternate cover, visit your local comic book shop.*]



L-R Shi, Lady Death and Vampirella.

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NEW GENE

as Image's best-selling miniseries GEN 13 goes monthly, hotshot artist J. Scott Campbell prepares to join the comics elite.

by Chris Golden

J. Scott Campbell was just out of high school in Colorado when he got up the nerve to send some of his artwork to one of his heroes, Jim Lee. Ten days later, Campbell's phone rang: Lee was on the other end, and Campbell's head just about exploded.

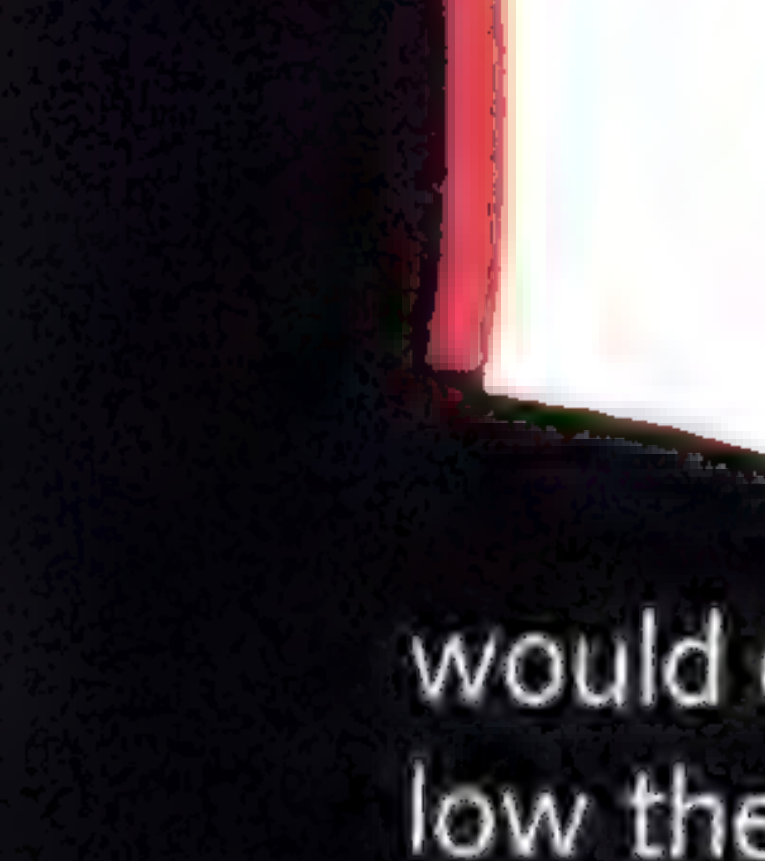
"He said he liked my stuff and that he wanted me to move out to San Diego and work for him," recalls Campbell. "That just blew me away. I was nineteen years old!"

Campbell quickly got the gig drawing Wildstorm Productions' *GEN 13* for Image Comics, which last year was heralded as one of comics' hottest miniseries. Back issues are increasingly difficult to find. Much of *GEN 13*'s success rests on Campbell's terrific penciling skills—not to mention his commendable habit of drawing sizzling hot babes.

"When I was learning how to draw anatomy, one of the things I prided myself on was the way I drew really attractive females," says Campbell. "I'm a big fan of the Disney animation films, and the more recent ones have female characters that are very attractive. I'm not saying *GEN 13* is a Disney-type book, but I would compare it more to that than the ones that follow the current 'bad girl' fad. Most of the females in *GEN 13* are more like the girl next door."

With *GEN 13* now a monthly series, readers can look forward to further exploration of the *Melrose-Place*-with-mutants love triangle between Grunge, Freefall and Fairchild.

"Grunge and Freefall had this relationship, but when the second Fairchild entered the picture, Grunge's eye immediately went to her," explains Campbell. "He and Freefall still have a relationship, but he doesn't hide the fact that he's got a thing for Fairchild."



RATION

13
CAMPBELL
94
WILLIAMS

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bala

Van Halen, america's heavy metal heroes, return

ncing act

By Dan Amrich

photos by Randee St. Nicholas

"I always thought that one of the most interesting and yet confusing things you could do was talk about a record," admits Alex Van Halen. "The music should speak for itself." Fortunately for us—and you—

Alex was able to rise above this apparent paradox to give FLUX an exclusive interview in which he enthusiastically discusses not only his band's brand of high-octane radio gasoline and latest album, Balance (Warner Bros.), but also genres ranging from electronic experiments to military marches. Wide-ranging musical knowledge is, of course, hardly surprising for someone of so musical a background as Alex: his father was a world-class clarinetist (who recorded with the band on "Big Bad Bill Is Sweet William Now," a cut from Diver Down) and his brother, as you may have heard, plays guitar.

to set the record straight with Balance, their latest triumph

But the serious musicianship that is the rock on which Van Halen's sound rests has often been obscured by their reputation as party animals. With the band's 1978 self-titled debut album, the Southern California quartet simultaneously killed disco dead and gave rock a reason to live. The band's balls-out approach and hyperkinetic live shows were anchored by the Van Halen brothers' awesome musical skills, while Eddie Van Halen redefined rock guitar as the world knew it, Alex delivered dizzying, primal rhythms. Tying the unit together were the no-nonsense basslines courtesy of Michael Anthony. Still, most observers focused on tales of VH's wild off-stage antics, and such licentious videos as "Hot For Teacher" only reinforced Van Halen's image as The Ultimate American Party Band. That these hedonistic legends were based in truth was often the fault/credit of former lead singer David Lee Roth, a consummate showman—and show-off—who once described Van Halen's music as "a cross between religion and hockey." Roth unceremoniously split in 1984 at the height of the band's fame to pursue a solo career, only to be quickly replaced with veteran rocker Sammy Hagar. The band has no regrets about Roth's departure, and Roth currently has no hits.

Now, 16 years and 10 albums later, Balance proves that Van Halen still know how to party and never forgot how to play. Sure, the babes and bucks are nice, but strip away the glamour, the videos and the still-sticky layers of Crystal Pepsi, and you'll find these guys are truly passionate about their art.

"We're so fortunate that we're able to do this," says Alex. "It boils down to us being in one room, making music that moves you—that's what it's all about."

FLUX: Is **Balance,** the title of your new album, a reference to the state of the band?

ALEX VAN HALEN: No, not at all. I think everybody's looking for that, but I don't want to get too deep. The working title of the album was *The Club*. A very good friend of ours, our manager Ed Leffler, was nicknamed "The Club." When he passed away last year, we wanted to dedicate the album to him. After thinking about it, we didn't want the record to have a depressing overtone, and if we called the album *The Club*, then people would find out why and say, "Oh, downer record." And that wasn't the point. But the man was on the go 25 hours a day and had many different levels of relationships with many people. There wasn't a time of day you couldn't call him and ask him something, personal or business, or just use him as an ear to bounce something off of. The man was a walking example of balance. And we thought that was a little bit more appropriate.

Plus, the word "balance" could be interpreted in a broader variety of ways; it could mean the balance of how you perceive yourself as opposed to how other people perceive you, it could be yin and yang, or it could be something as simple as going through one day of your life where nothing seems to bother you—you're in balance.

FLUX: Your solo percussion piece, "Doin' Time," is quite a departure for Van Halen. This is your first drum solo on record, isn't it?

VAN HALEN: Well, it's a song without the other guys playing. [*laughs*] At least that's my interpretation of it; again, everybody's got their own perception of what something is. It's about two minutes long, kind of a vibe thing, and it seemed to go good with another song, so it became an intro, and it all blended very nicely. Bruce just said, "Make something musical. Don't give me a drum solo—I know you can play and I know you'd like to show the people, but that's not the point. Save that for the live shows." So I played with and against my own self in a piece that's interesting. It's not your stereotypical drum solo, where you can't wait until it's over. That's the irony of being a drummer: you spend years and years learning different techniques, and to the average layman, it's, "When's he going to speed up? Wow, look how fast he's going!" [*laughs*] But that's okay, because I knew that when I picked this instrument. Everything fits in the big picture.

FLUX: I understand there's a Van Halen CD-ROM in the works. Could you tell us a little about it?

VAN HALEN: It won't be a commercial release, just a freebie press kit. If we don't have time to sit down with journalists when we're on tour, they can still get info on the band. It's kind of a cross between an interview and a video—instead of doing one song and making a video of it, you're talking about everything from the weather to what kind of drums I use.

But I'm hoping the CD-ROM will add some depth to the band. We've always been perceived as a party band—and we are, I mean, who doesn't like to party?—but there's a different, substantial side to the band. And even though I think our audience knows that, you can't always get everything you want across in your music, so hopefully this will give a little idea of where we're coming from, what's behind the album. Or maybe the opposite will happen—maybe people will see this thing and go, "Wow, I didn't know he was like that! Geez, I'm not listening to this guy anymore!" [*laughs*]

Somebody recently asked me some strange, deep question about our music, and I just had to think, let's not over analyze everything. This is a rock and roll band, and let's not forget what music is about. Music is primarily to lift your spirits, and it gets you away from CNN and the depressing state of the world. As a song develops, the music itself is what gets you off. I'm not going to say it doesn't need lyrics or vocals, because that's an additional dimension, but the music itself holds up. That's what gets *me* off. You listen to it, and it *moves* you. That's what's important.

FLUX: As far as other VH product goes, did you guys ever consider putting out your own pinball machine like Kiss in the Seventies or Guns N' Roses just this past year?

VAN HALEN: I don't know. We did a thing a couple years ago where Pepsi was going to use portions of the "Right Now" video in their commercial. They were going to have a studio band record just enough of it so that you'd know which song it was and they would use the same cutting techniques as the video and everything. They were gracious, I guess, enough to call us and let us know. "If you guys don't let us use part of your song, then we're just going to do it anyway." And we figured, "Well, fuck it, let them use our version," because the first day that it was on the air it had exposure of one *billion* people. That's a fifth of the planet!

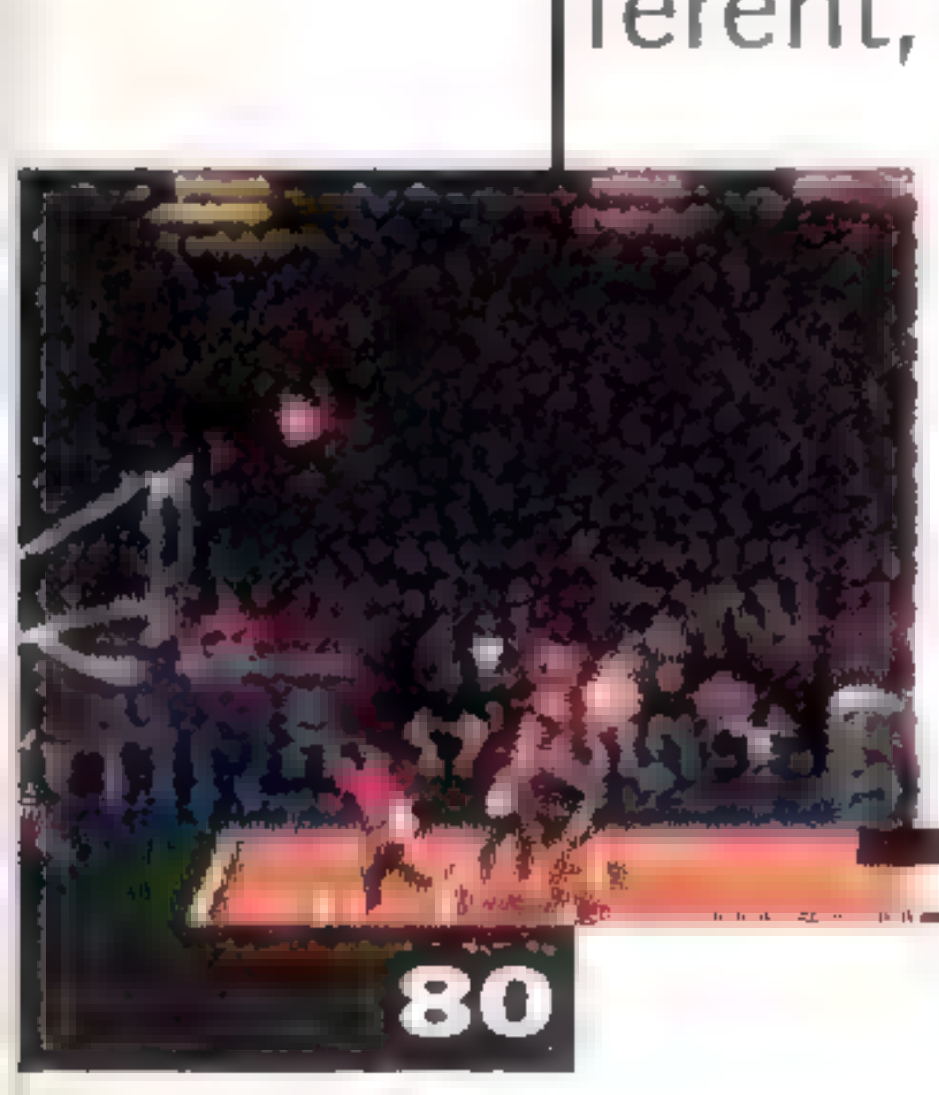
But the point I'm getting at is that we've always avoided endorsing anything or letting the music be used for other things or, you know, pinball machines or any of that crud, because, what's the point? But there are certain times that you have to go with it. That's the stuff people never hear—they go, "Wow, you sold out," but in this case, Pepsi was going to do it anyway. And people might as well hear the original version. As far as the money, by the time you subtract the amount it cost to make the video—because without the video they would have never come to us, and Warner Bros. owns the masters so they take 50% of it—and by the time you get through all the expenses, we get nothing—nothing except having to defend ourselves. [*laughs*]

FLUX: So what do you do when you're not drumming?

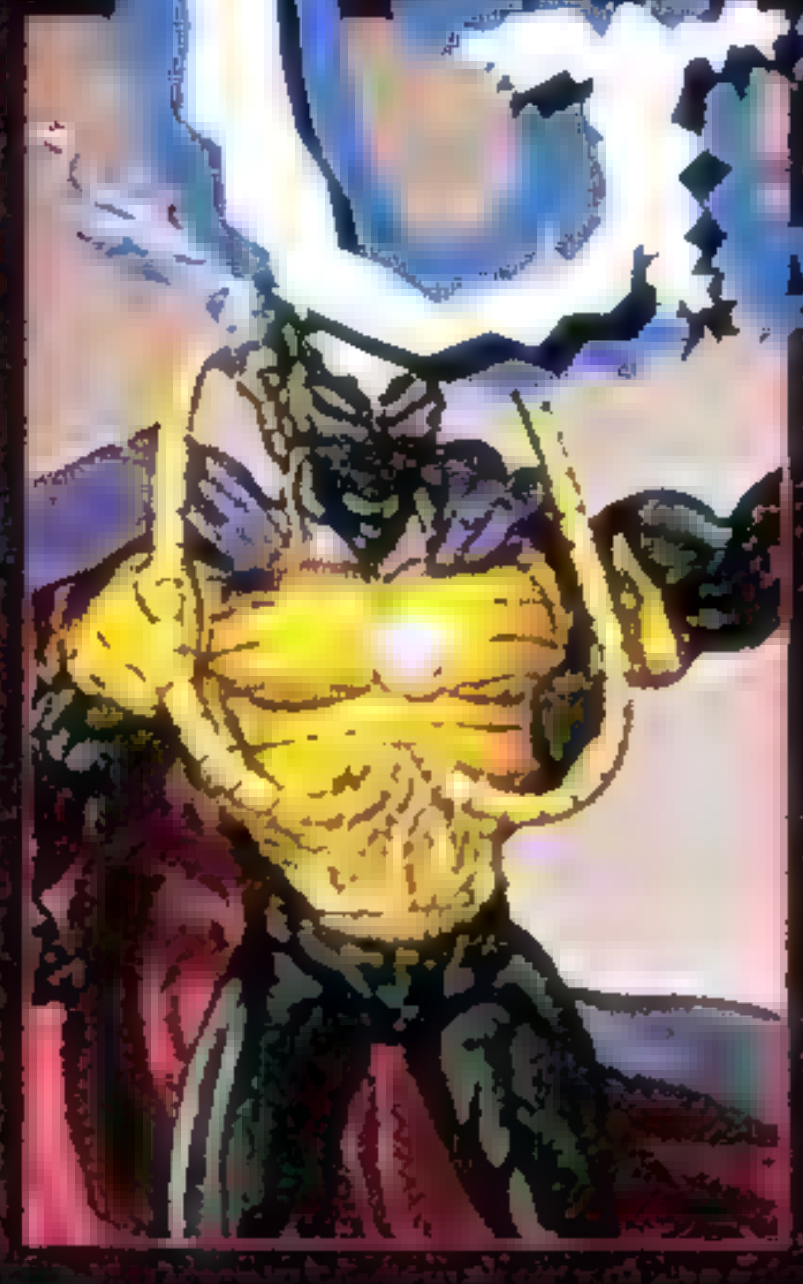
VAN HALEN: I mess around with computers; I have some synthesizers and MIDI equipment, and through that, I'm able to become the band leader. I sit there and I dictate to the little machines what they're supposed to do and it gives me a sense of power. [*laughs*] And it's great, because I can do things on the computer that are almost physically impossible to play on an instrument, and some of the most unique sounds come out.

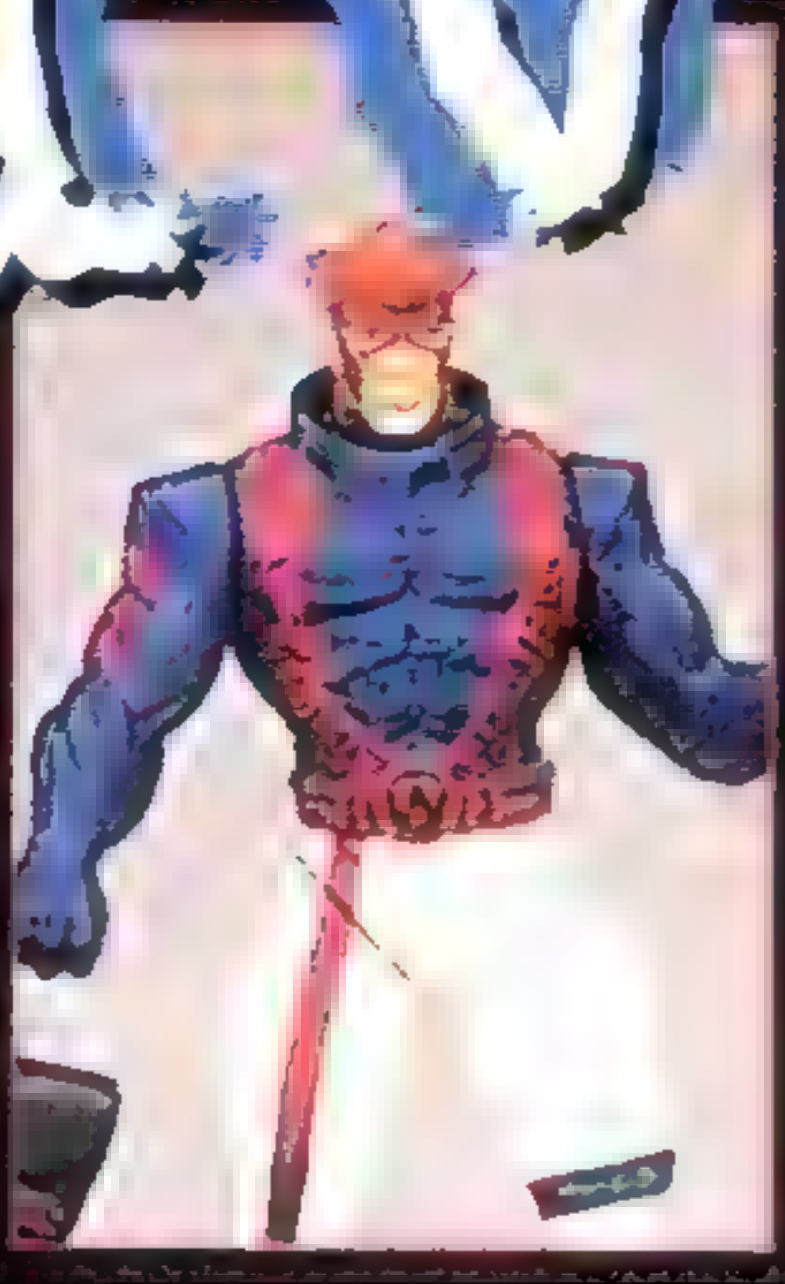
FLUX: Have you ever thought about the day when there is no more Van Halen?

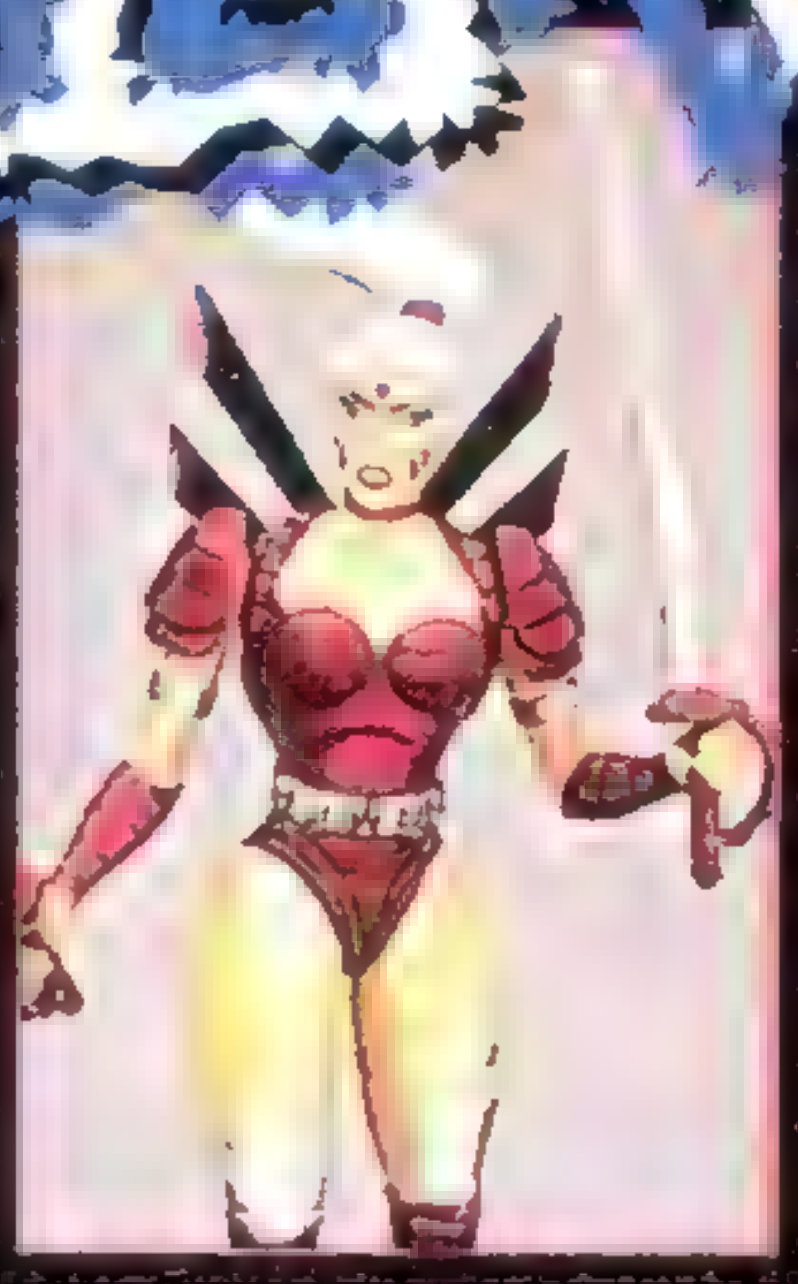
VAN HALEN: I'd have to think about that, but human beings are so adaptable...I'm sure there's some kind of drum I could play. But I don't even know what things will be like a year from now. It'll pave its own way, I guess. As long as you're honest and you're generally interested in what you're doing, not only does the audience read that intangible quality, but you get a satisfaction out of it as well. The moment that you're sitting there saying, "Oh, we've gotta do this, then we've gotta do this," it becomes stale. *That's* when you put out a box set. [*laughs*]

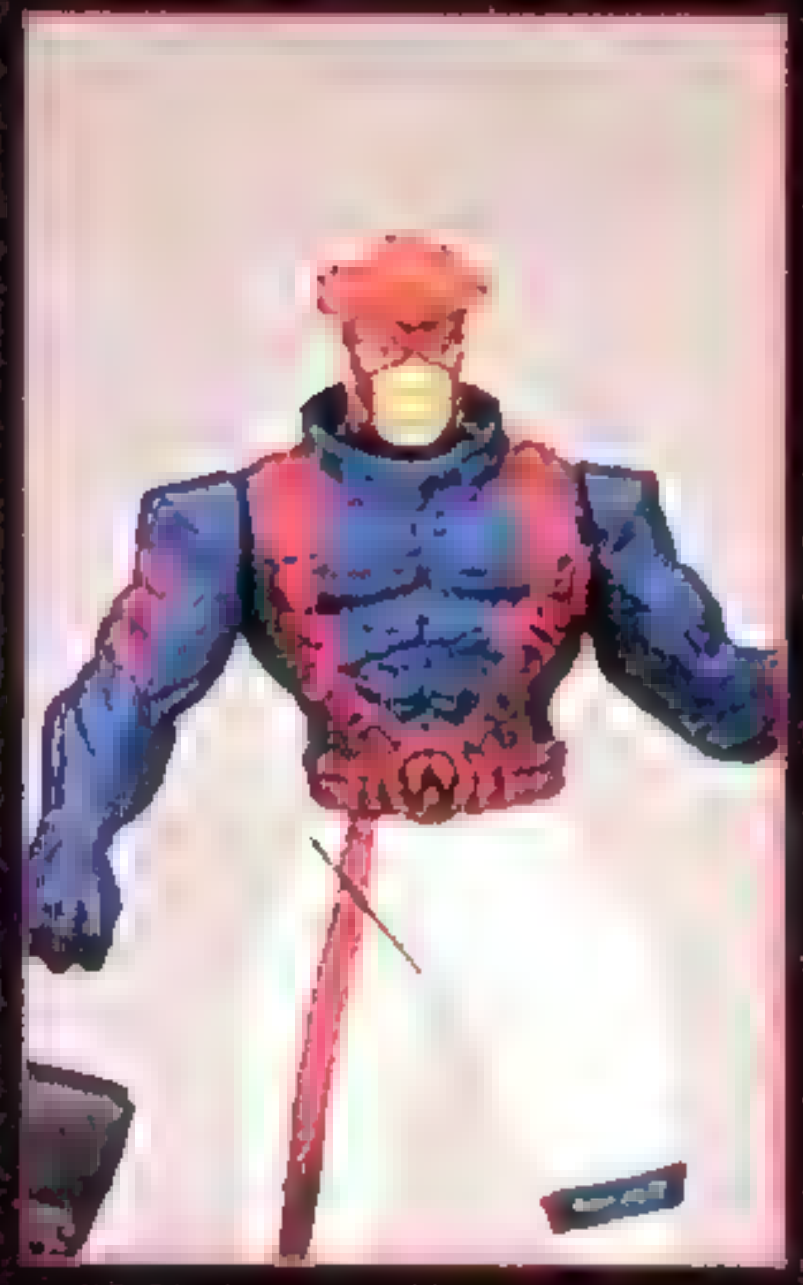


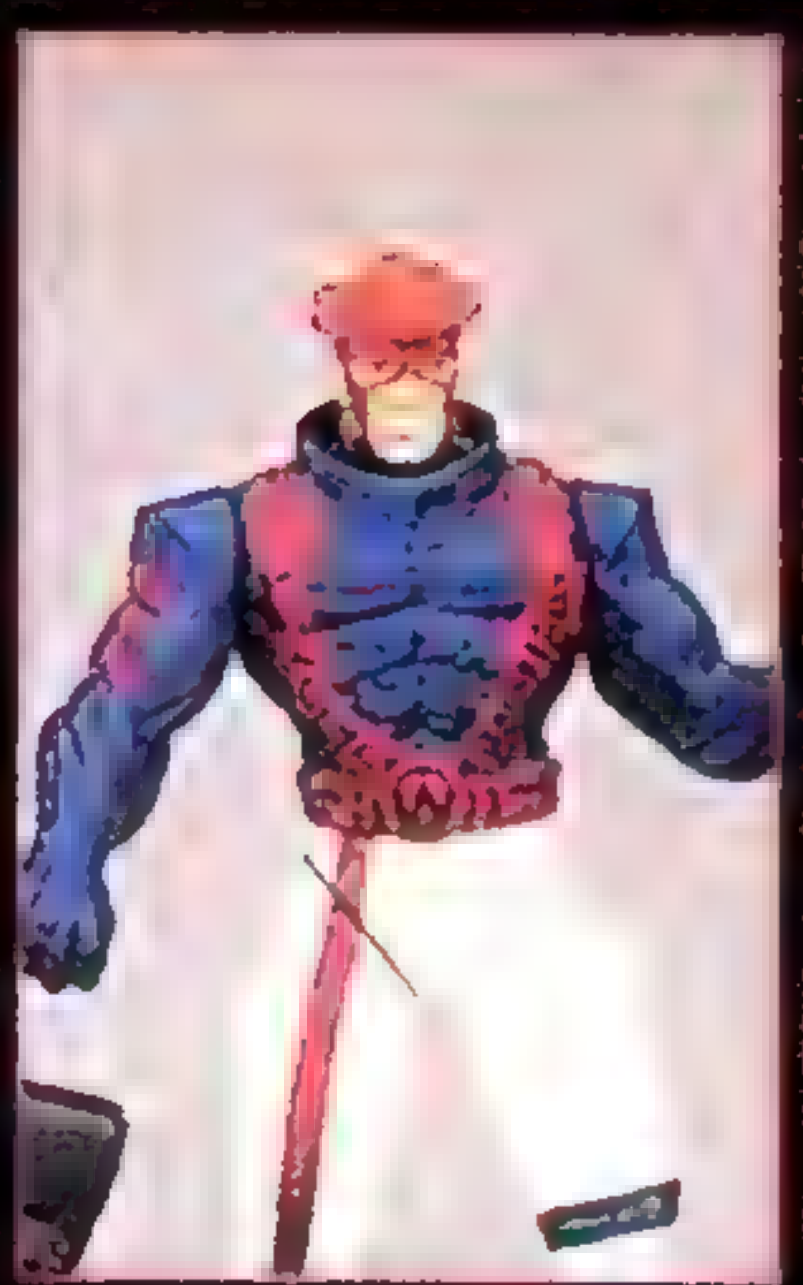
ULTRA RARE WILDC.A.T.S YOUNGBLOOD GIVEAWAY

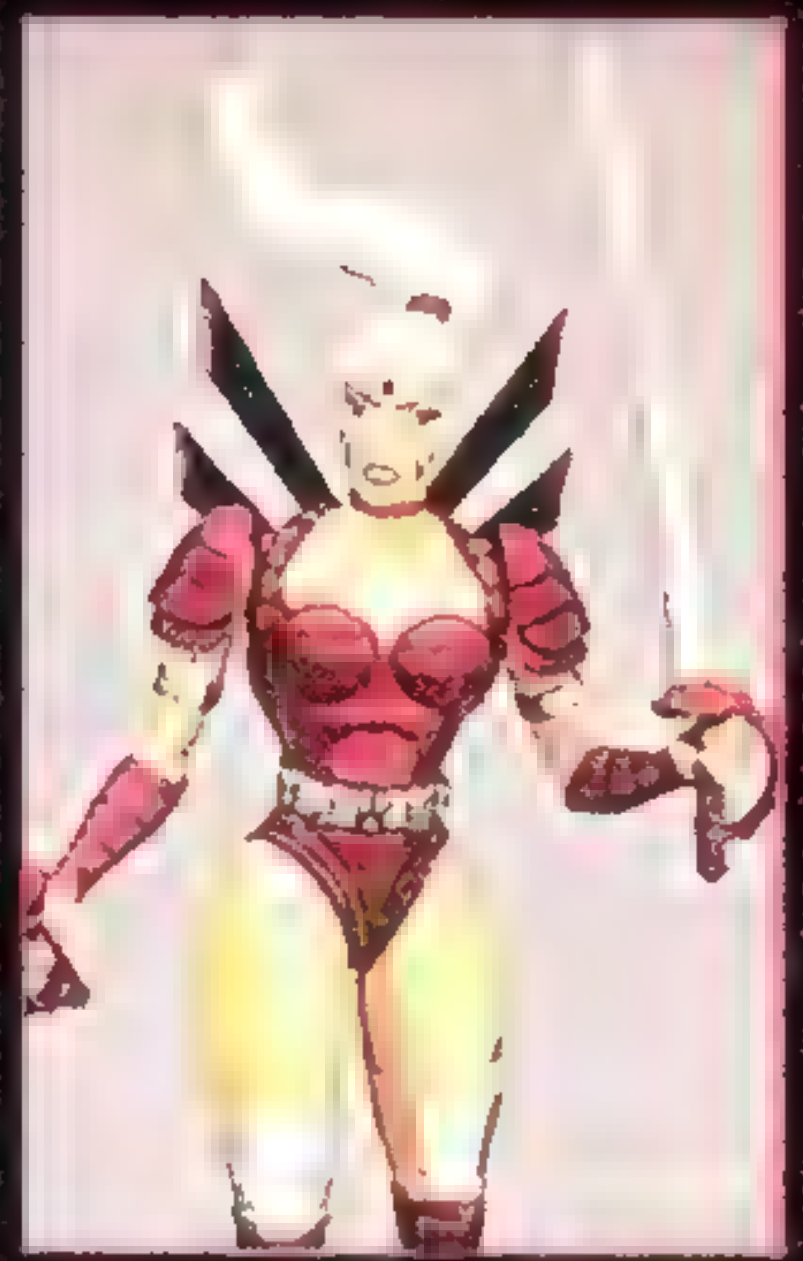


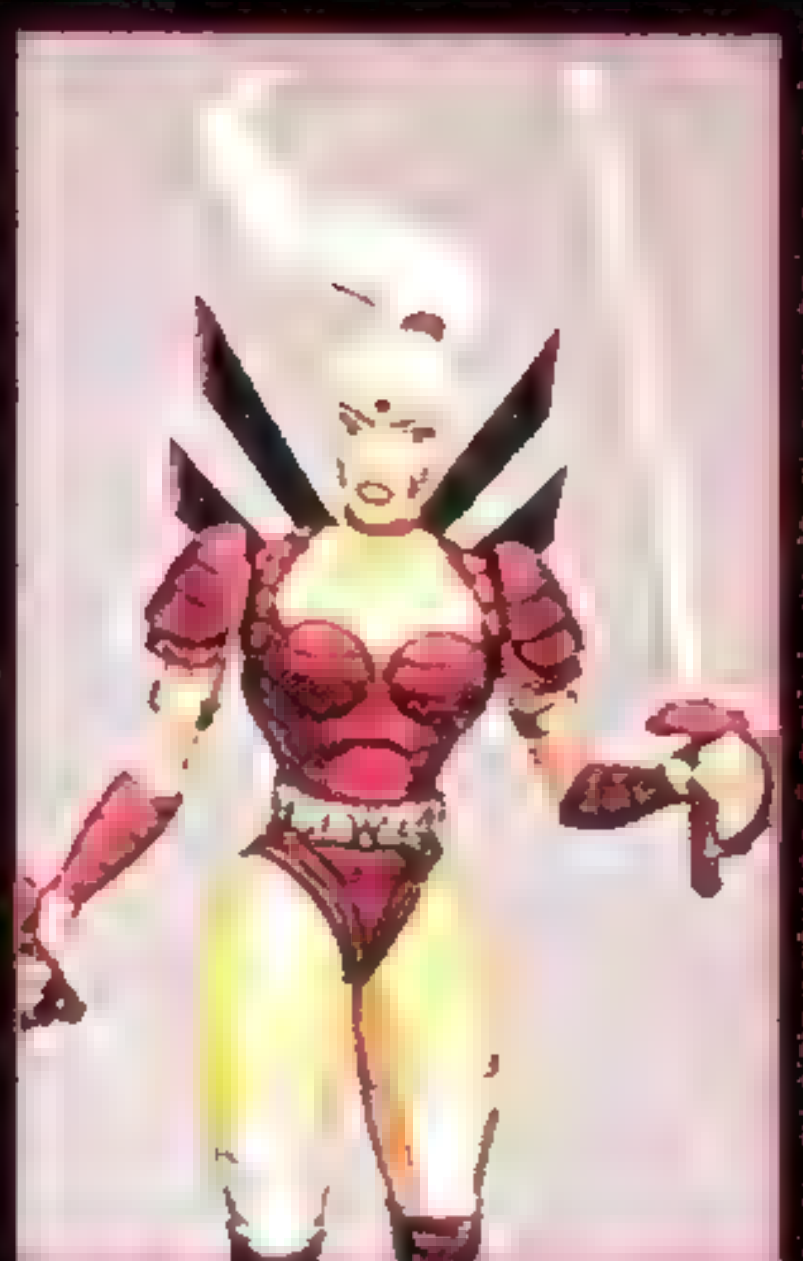


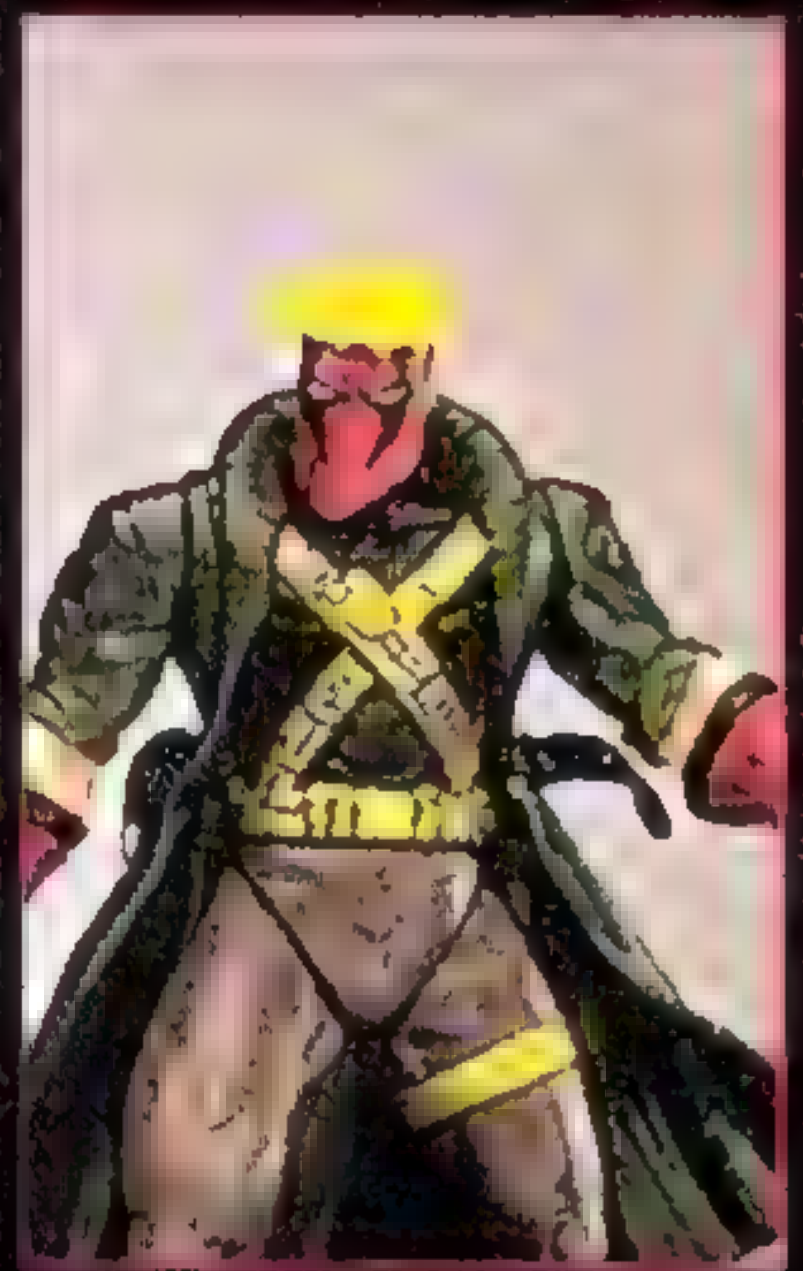


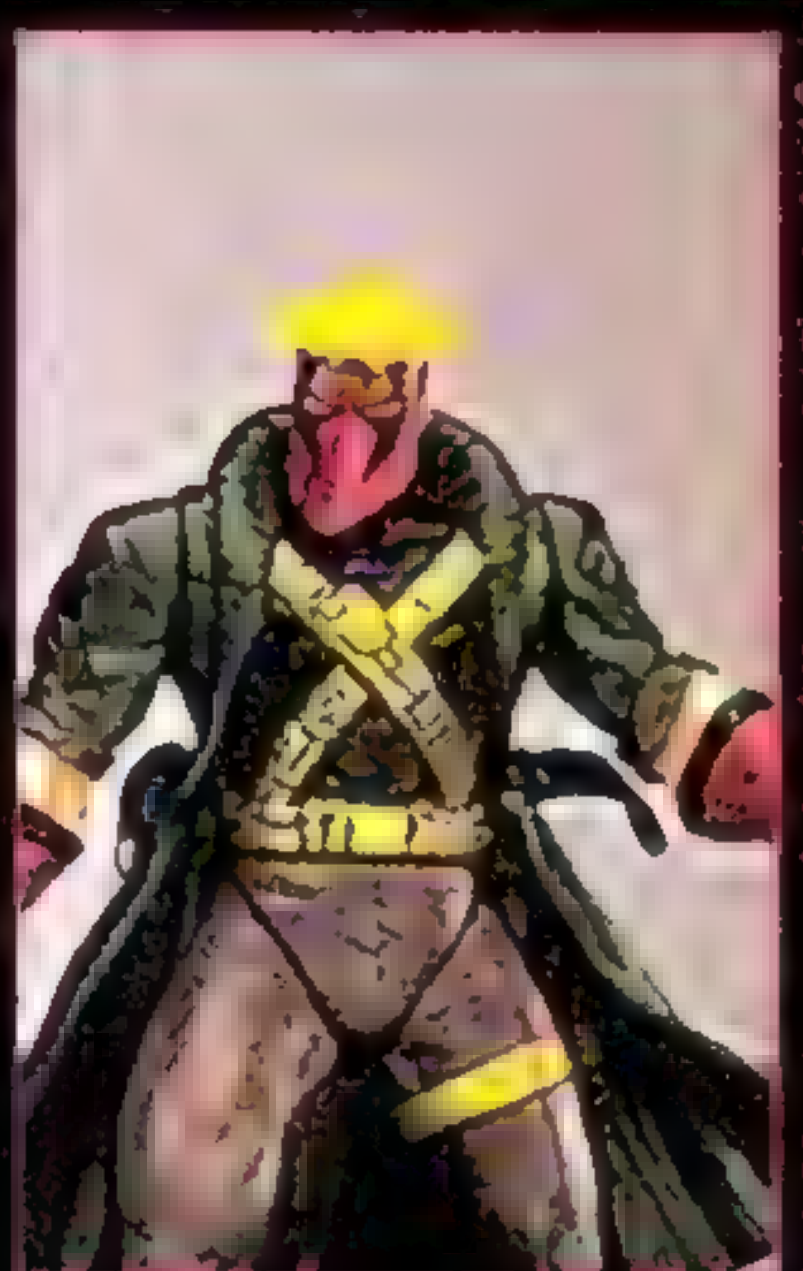


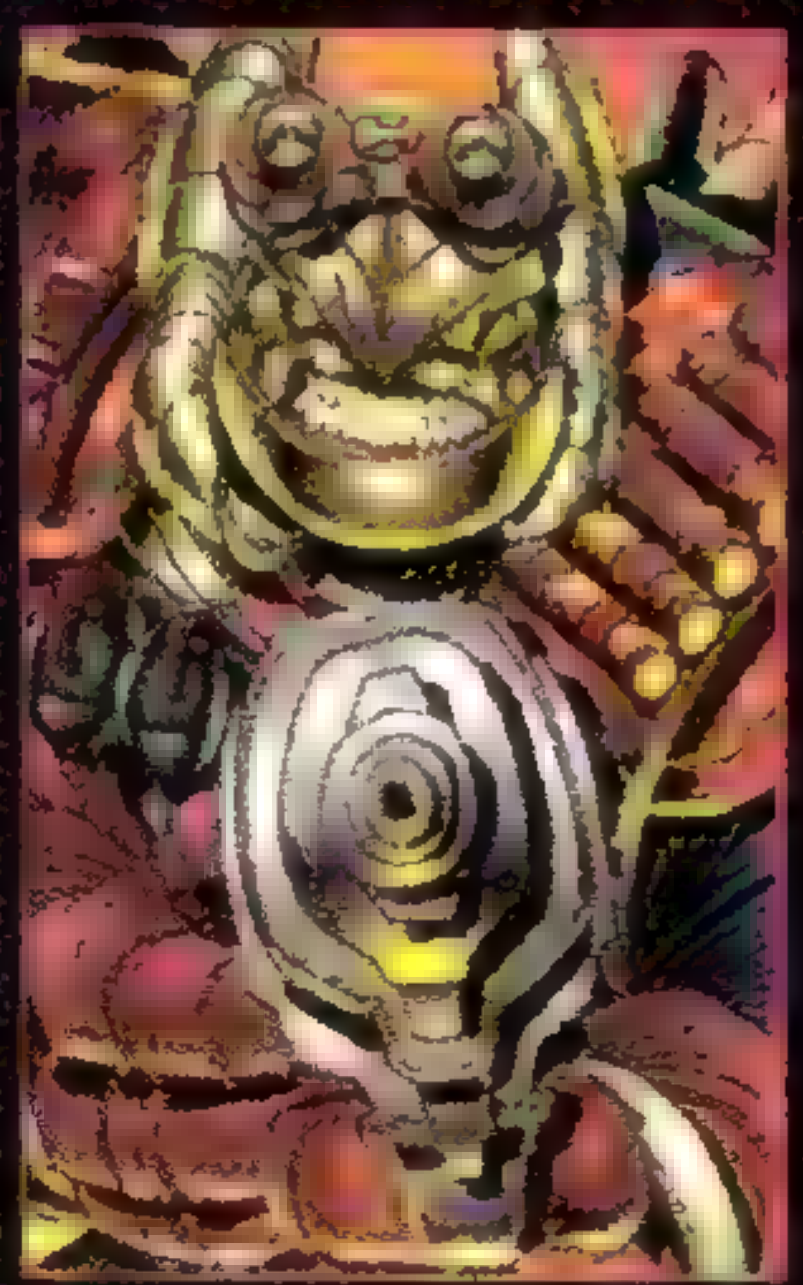


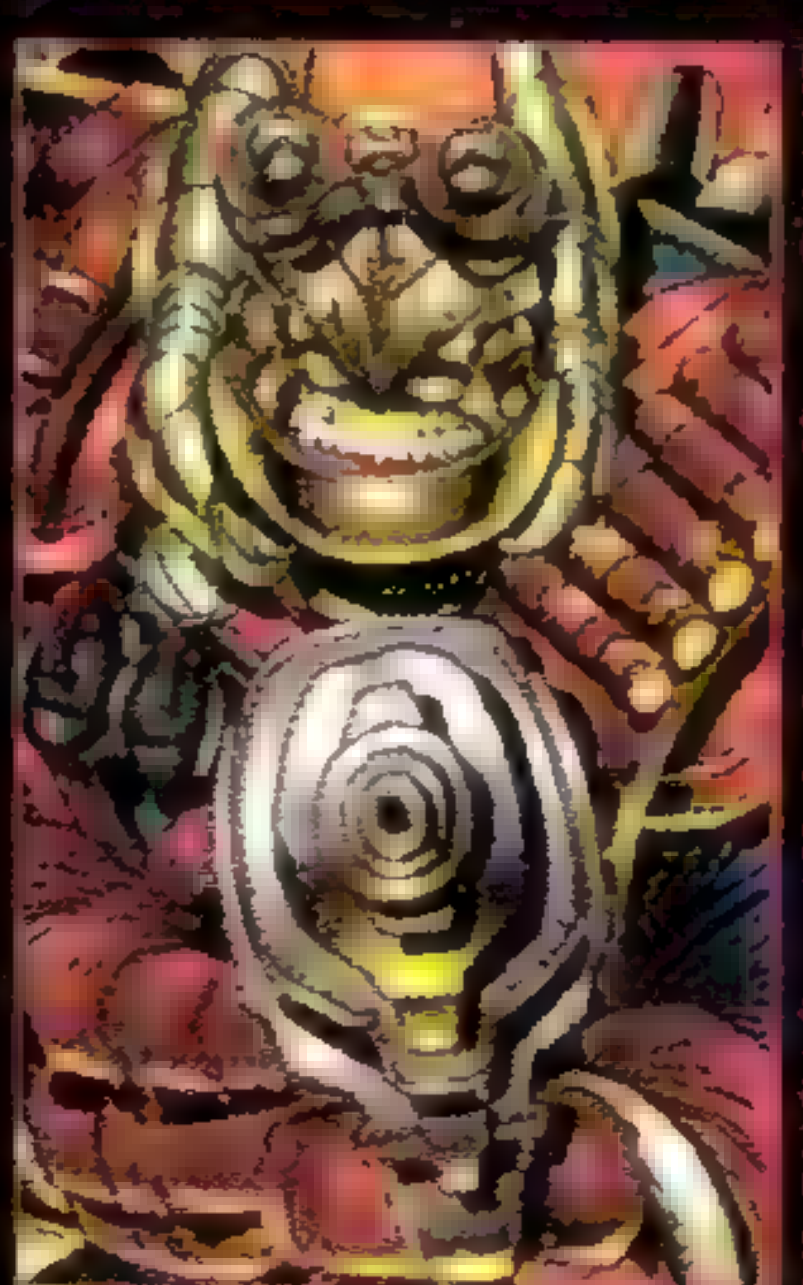












We've got two sets of one-of-a-kind, low-numbered WILDC.A.T.S action figures—and we're ready to give them away! Want 'em? Betcha do. Just fill out the coupon below and send it in. Should you be on the winning end of the drawing, you'll receive five 6" action figures from Playmates' new WILDC.A.T.S toy line: ZEALOT, SPARTAN, MAUL, HELSPONT and WARBLADE!

Each figure comes with a special edition collector card, plus various weapons and accessories!

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But that's not all! We also have a bunch of cool BADROCK items from SkyBox's forthcoming YOUNGBLOOD trading card series to give away! Prizes include: 10 BADROCK SkyDisc cards and 5 individually-numbered CD-sized BADROCK SkyDiscs. One super-lucky person will also win a complete set of YOUNGBLOOD cards, a BADROCK CD-sized SkyDisc and a package of Extreme Studios gear (hat, t-shirt and dog tags).

TOTAL RETAIL VALUE OF ALL PRIZES IS APPROXIMATELY $1,100!

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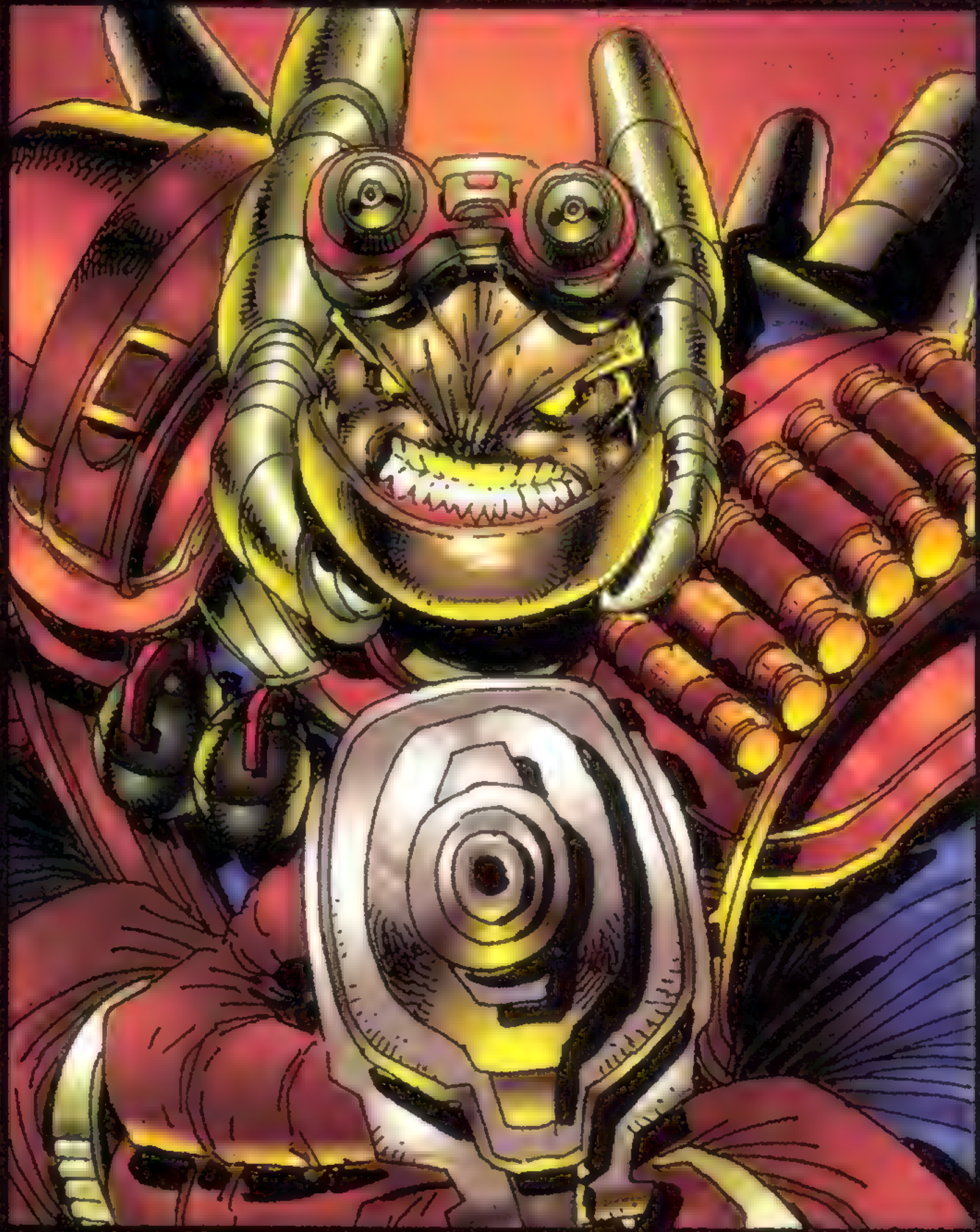
FIVE SECOND PRIZES:
A **BADROCK** CD-sized SkyDisc

TEN THIRD PRIZES:
A **BADROCK** SkyDisc card



Entries must be received no later than June 25, 1995.

No purchase necessary. Winners will be notified by phone. The prize will be shipped as soon as possible. All employees of FLUX, Harris Publications, SkyBox, Extreme Studios and Playmates are not eligible. Winners are ineligible to enter future sweepstakes in FLUX. The drawing will be held on June 30, 1995; all entries must be received by then. Only 1 entry per person.

DETACH AND SEND TO: FLUX 1115 Broadway, 8th Fl,
New York, NY 10010 ATTN: WILDC.A.T.S/YOUNGBLOOD GIVEAWAY

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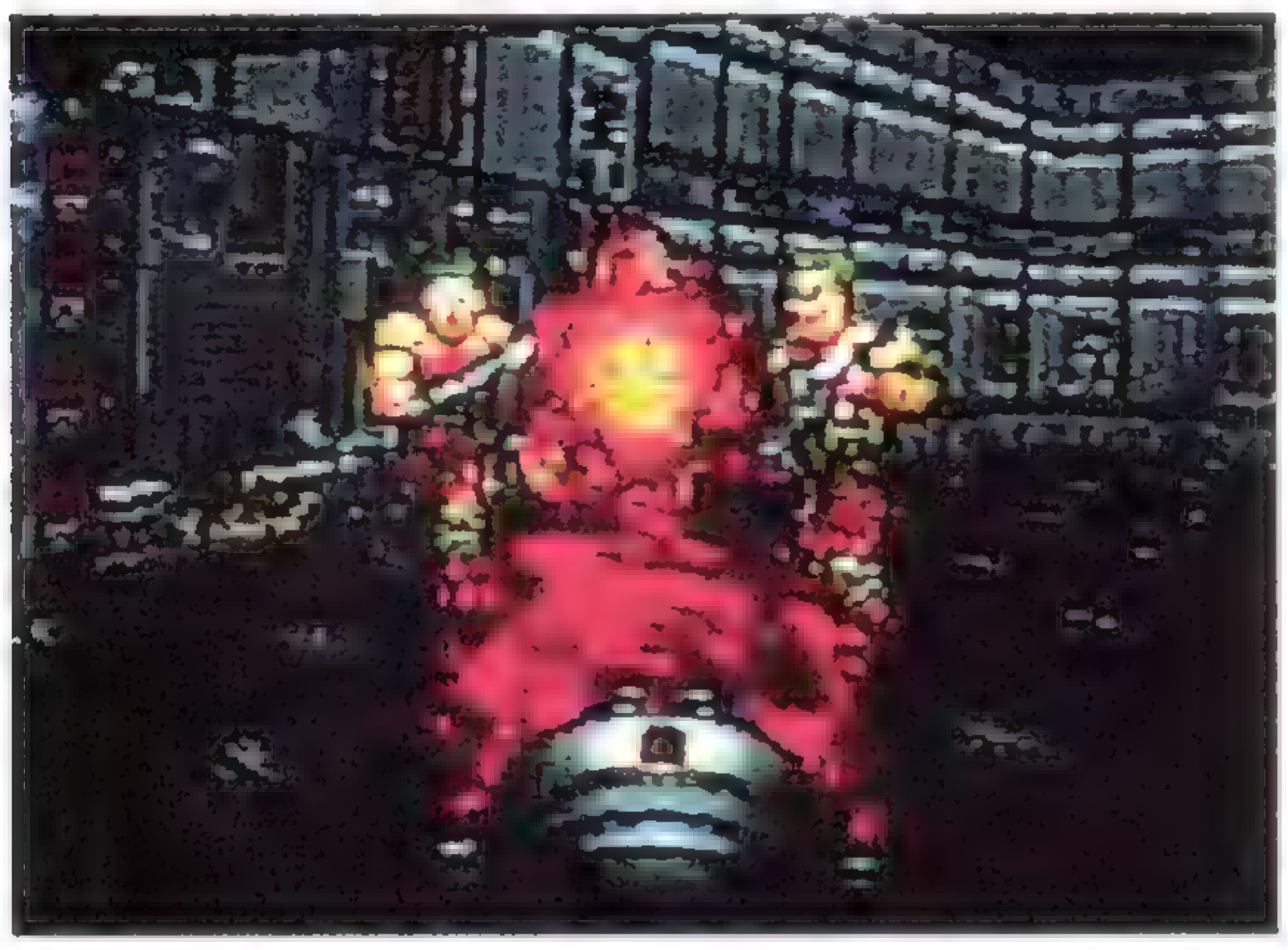
FLUX Reviews FLUX

games, comix, music

games

DOOM

While not quite up to the high standards of the PC and Jaguar versions, *DOOM* mach 32X is still one of the most intense and challenging shooters around, and easily the best the 32X has to offer thus far. You haven't lived until you've gone into the wee hours of the night, head spinning, eyes watering and stomach churning from a marathon *DOOM* session—and if you have no other means of playing *DOOM*, the 32X version will do nicely.—JK



SYSTEM: 32X
MANUFACTURER: id Software/Sega
GRAPHICS: A-
CONTROL: A
SOUND: B-
PASSWORD/SAVE: Yes (except weapons)
BUY/RENT: Buy
OVERALL: B+

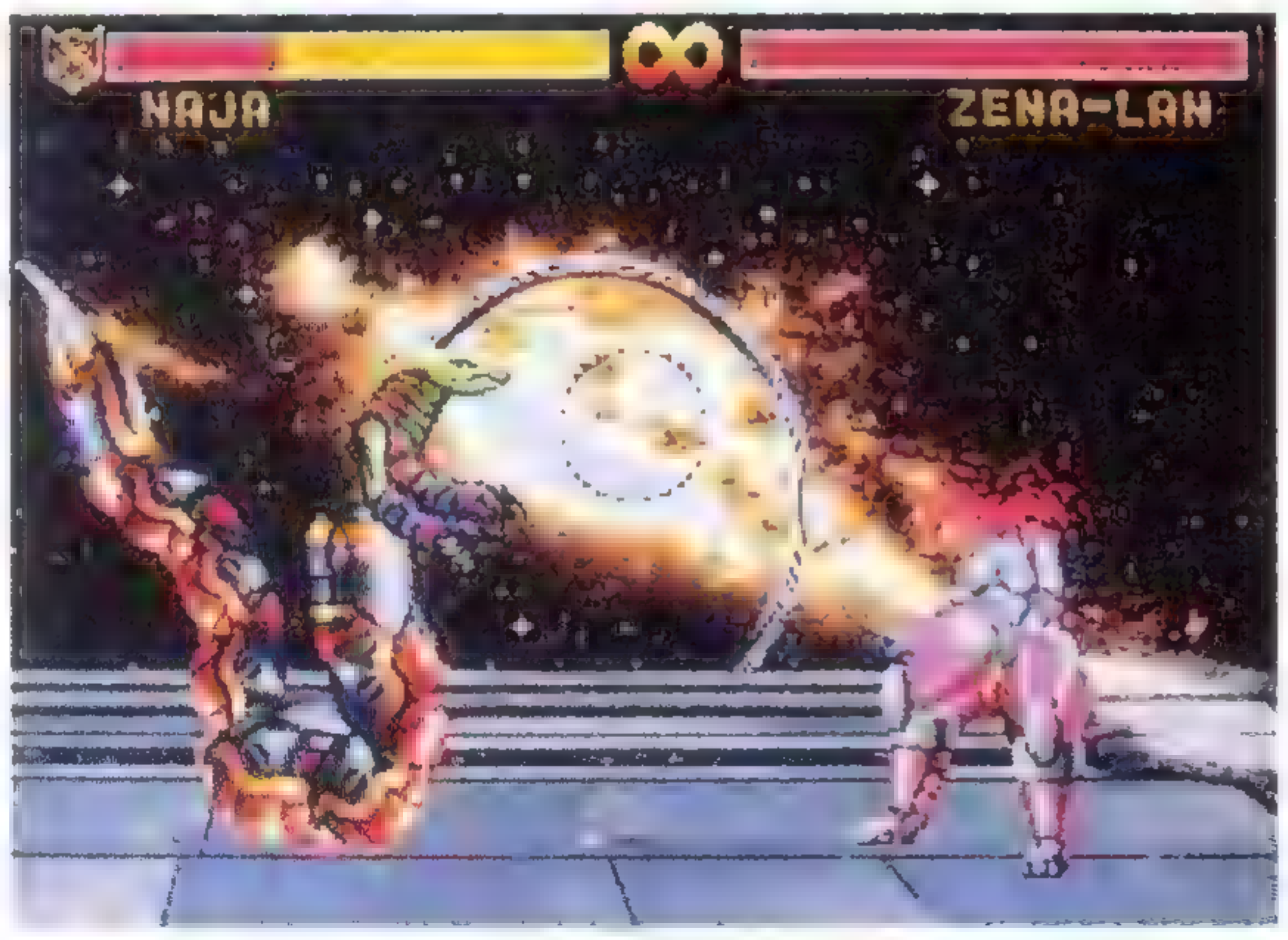
VIRTUA RACING

Unlike most arcade games, like *Mortal Kombat II* and *NBA Jam*, some coin-ops just weren't meant to be scaled down for the home. *Virtua Racing*, the granddaddy of arcade racing thrills, is one such game. While the 32X version of *Virtua Racing* is about as close to the arcade original as one could ask, the problem is that, when using a standard home controller, sitting on the bed and watching the action go by on a 19-inch screen, the exhilaration one gets from sitting in that little Formula One car and gripping that steering wheel while watching everything on the big monitor in the arcades is lost. The game is good, but the *effect* just isn't there. Still, anything is better than that lame $99 Genesis version.—JK

SYSTEM: 32X
MANUFACTURER: Sega
GRAPHICS: B
CONTROL: B-
SOUND: B-
PASSWORD/SAVE: No
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

COSMICCARNAGE

Not much good to say about this one. Basically a second-rate fighting game with sluggish action, awful sound and overly-detailed graphics that make it hard to determine just what the hell is going on. Despite some cool creatures and alien beings and some nifty attack moves, *Cosmic Carnage* would have made a lame Genesis cart—which makes it an even worse 32X game.—JK



SYSTEM: 32X
MANUFACTURER: Sega
GRAPHICS: B-
CONTROL: C-
SOUND: C
PASSWORD/SAVE: No
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: D+

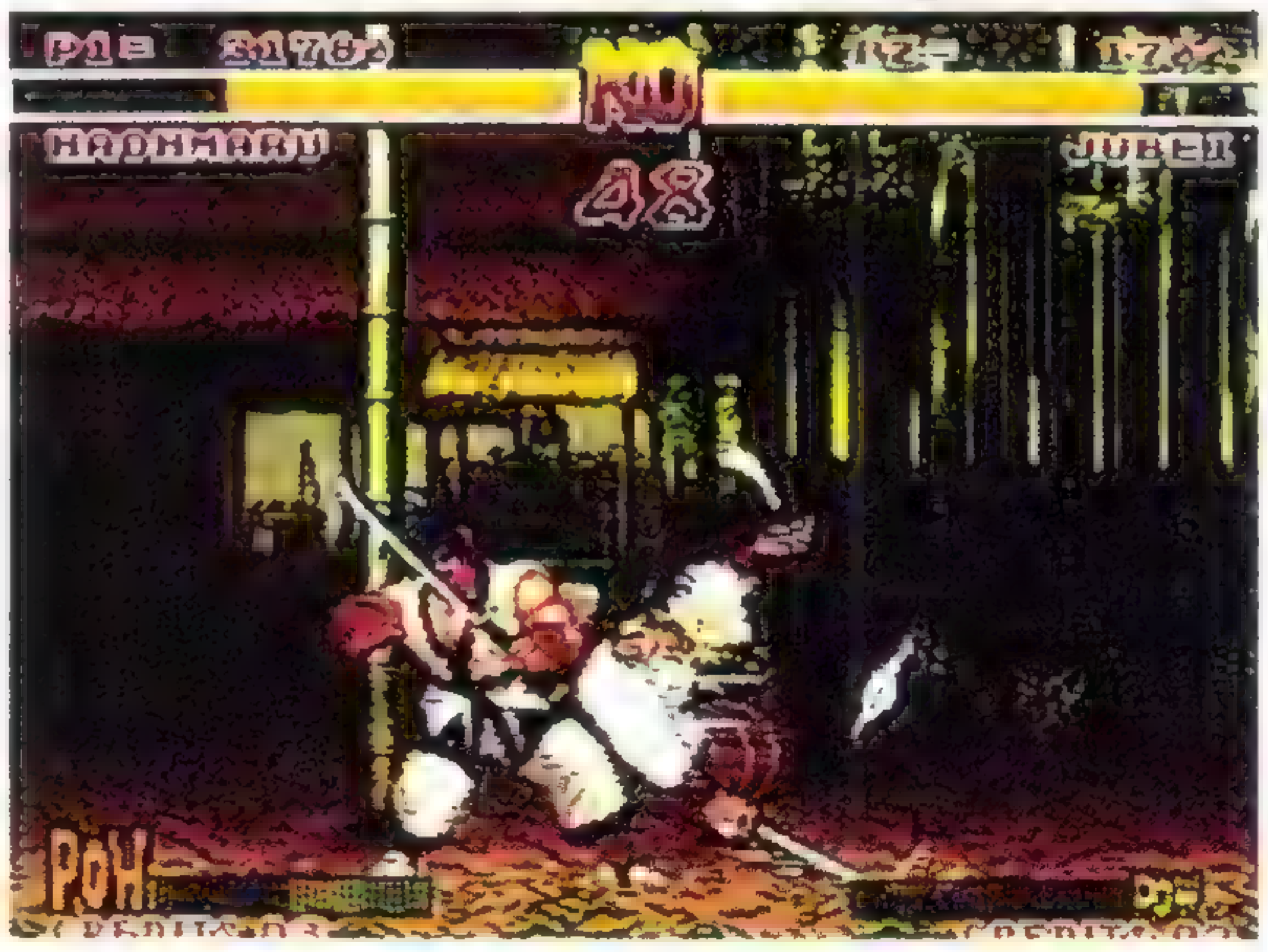
STAR WARS ARCADE

Star Wars fans who live for nothing more than climbing aboard an X-Wing and blasting TIE Fighters out of the sky will dig the 32X version of *Star Wars Arcade*. You can play either the original arcade version of the game, or the 32X mode which features all of the original arcade action plus 4 new levels. Tough controls will have your hands cramping in no time, but some nice graphics and cool digitized sound bytes straight from the film (although God knows where they got Admiral Ackbar's voice) make this a good one for *Star Wars* fans.—JK

SYSTEM: 32X
MANUFACTURER: Sega/LucasArts
GRAPHICS: B
CONTROL: B-
SOUND: B+
PASSWORD/SAVE: No
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

SAMURAI SHODOWN

To put it bluntly, this is the only home version of *Samurai Shodown* that doesn't suck. The 3DO release has all the unique characters (yes, even Earthquake) and all the cool scaling effects that set *Shodown* apart from the fighting pack in the first place, unlike the watered-down 16-bit versions. Graphics are dead-on perfect, right down to the spurting blood; the music is clear and direct from the arcade, although the

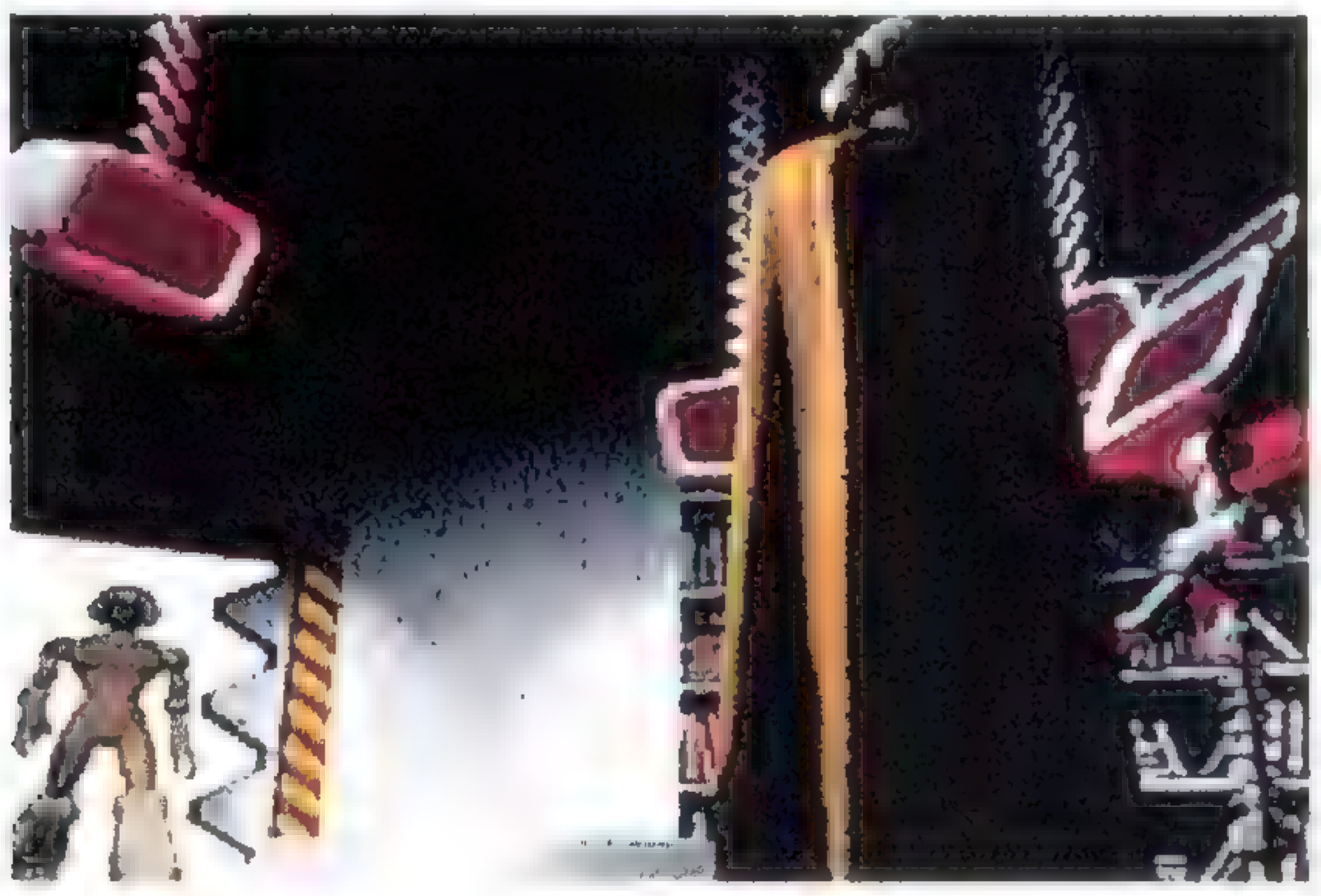


speech is inexplicably fuzzy. Disc loading time is minimal, five seconds max, and the control is nice and tight (though a joystick would complete that arcade feel). Just one more game that makes the 3DO worth it.—**BRIAN CARNEGIE**

SYSTEM: 3DO
MANUFACTURER: Crystal Dynamics
GRAPHICS: A
CONTROL: A
SOUND: B
PASSWORD/SAVE: No
BUY/RENT: Buy
OVERALL: A

INFERNO: THE ODYSSEY CONTINUES

Get this: You're an heroic space pilot out to conquer a race of hostile aliens. Viva la difference! *Inferno* offers ultra-speedy, dizzying interstellar action from within a virtual cockpit (try it, it's cool), interspersed with nicely animated—but way, *way* boring—cinemas. The almost-too-responsive controls make piloting the ship downright slippery, and be prepared for *lots* of little pauses as the game loads data from the disc. And while *Inferno* is essentially a one-upping of *Wing Commander* without the charm, it does have far better 3D effects, a widely variable mission plan and wicked fast gameplay. Oh, and a foil-enhanced box.—**DAN AMRICH**



SYSTEM: PC CD-ROM
MANUFACTURER: Ocean
GRAPHICS: B
CONTROL: C+
SOUND: B
PASSWORD/SAVE: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

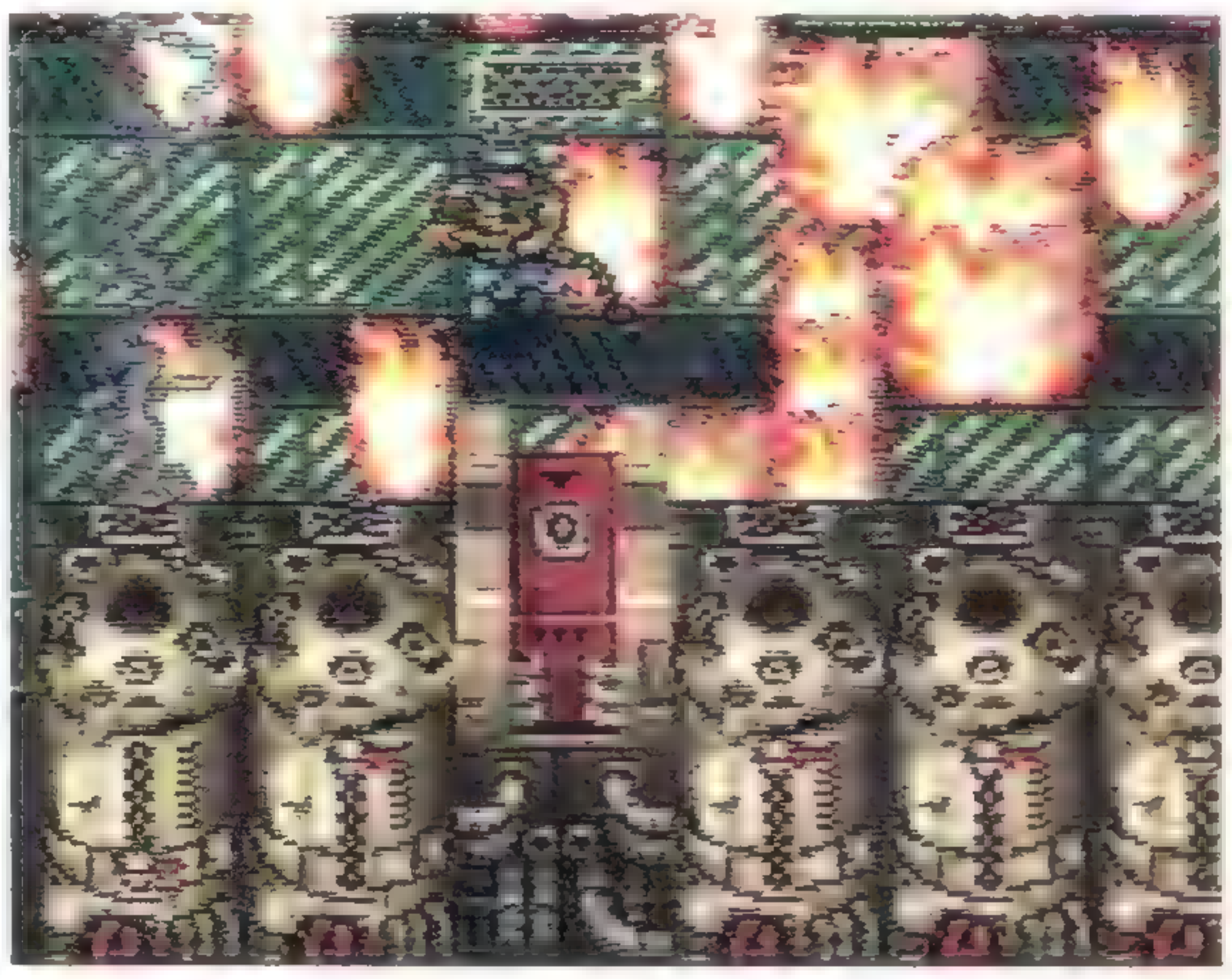
MTV'S CLUB DEAD

MTV's all-too-full-of-itself sense of hipness oozes all over *Club Dead*—so much so that you might forget there's a pretty captivating adventure game buried underneath. As Sam the ex-con/cyber-plumber, your mission is to find out why all the patrons of the Alexandria hotel keep waking up dead. The story unfolds (somewhat) in confusing, none-too-colorful clips of full-motion video, but all the computer-generated graphics are renderific. It's an intentionally weird platter of scrambled megs, but it may or may not be *your* kind of weird. This is your *Myst* on drugs. Any questions?—**DAN AMRICH**

SYSTEM: PC CD-ROM
MANUFACTURER: Viacom New Media
GRAPHICS: B+
CONTROL: A
SOUND: B-
PASSWORD/SAVE: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

IGNITION FACTOR

In Jaleco's *Ignition Factor* for the SNES, you assume the role of a firefighter and go on a mission to...well...fight fires. Sound boring? Maybe. But the truth is that *Ignition Factor* is a helluva lot of fun for a game that really doesn't involve any killing or space travel. Before you embark on each mission, you'll spend time in a briefing room where you select the type of fire you wish to battle (industrial chemical fire with toxic conditions, fabric warehouse electrical fire, etc.), equip yourself accordingly (keeping in mind, of course, that excessive weight may slow you down in a tight situation) and examine a profile of the mission (including floor plans that show building layouts and street maps with firetruck placement and wind direction). Then it's off to the disaster at hand. Despite the conspicuous absence of the usual video game death-dealing and the constant, irritating knowledge that the game is somewhat educational—and, gag, politically correct—*Ignition Factor* is well worth a weekend rental for even the kill-happy vidiot, and a must-play for all you wussy nonviolent SNESers out there.—**CHRIS HUDAK**



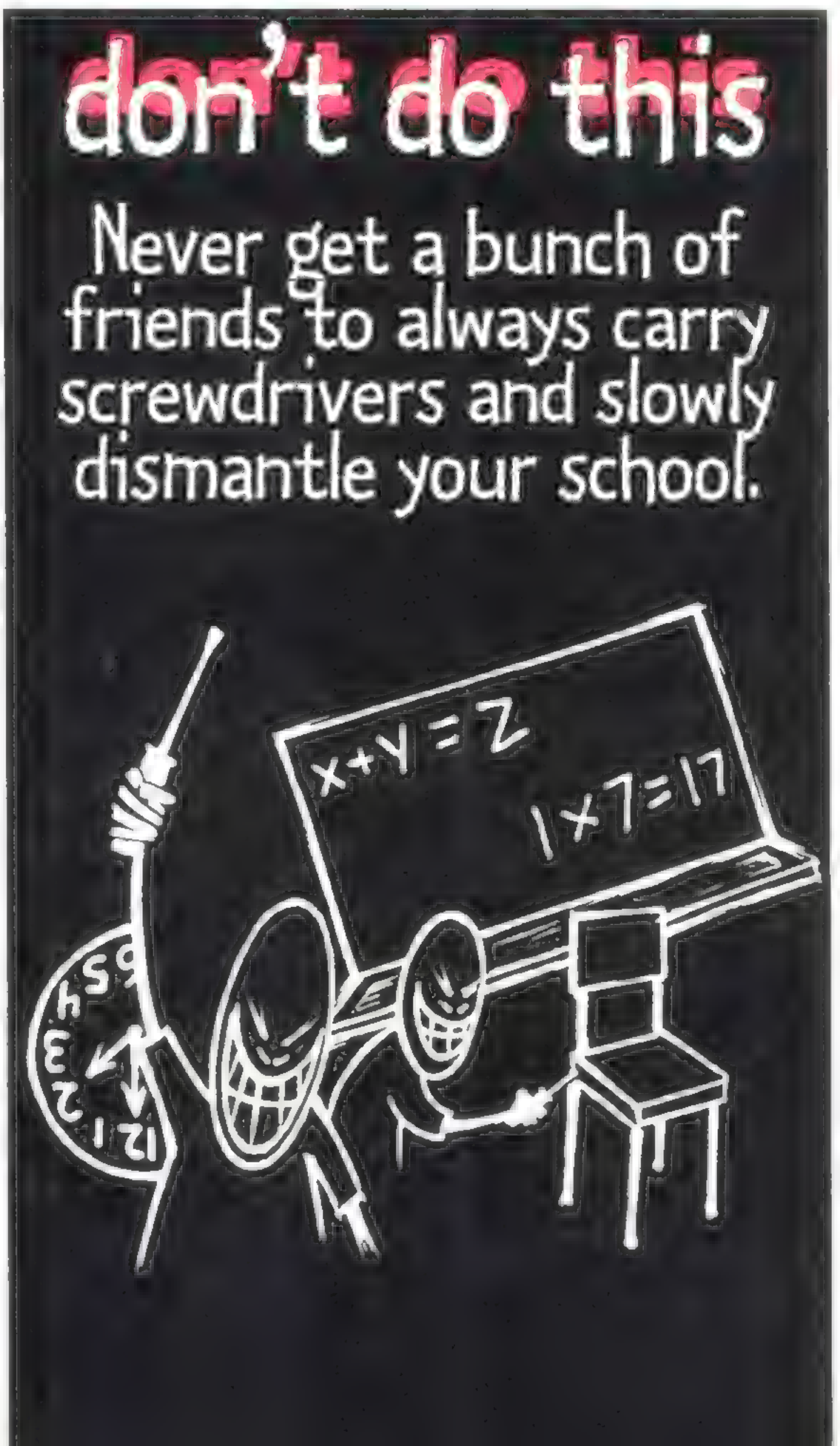
SYSTEM: SNES
MANUFACTURER: Jaleco
GRAPHICS: B+
CONTROL: B
SOUND: C+
PASSWORD/SAVE: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

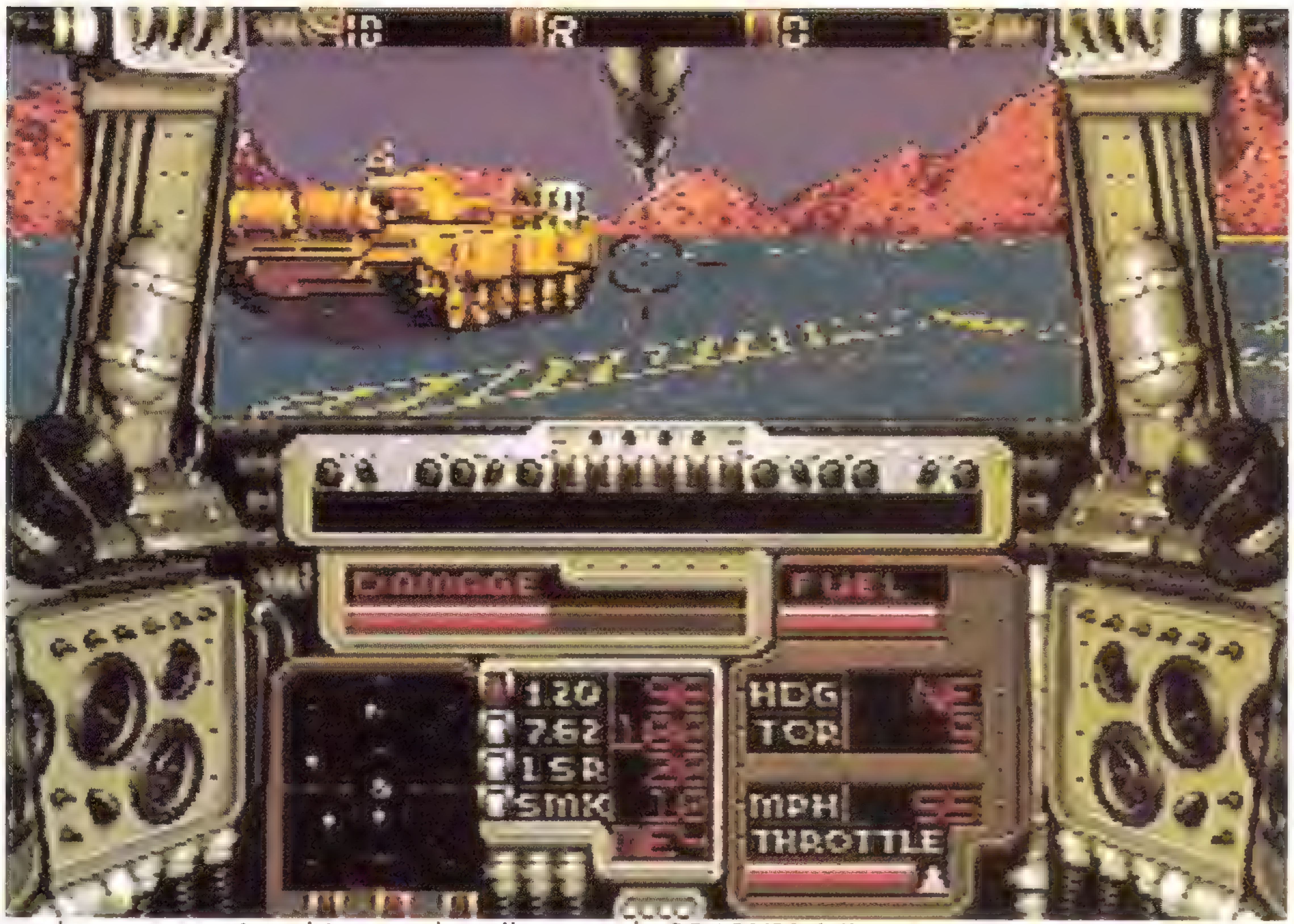
RDF: GLOBAL CONFLICT

Imagine a stripped-down *AH-3 Thunderstrike* with a ground view and without a rockin' soundtrack, and you've got a rough sense of *RDF*. Drive a tank around a 360-degree landscape at speeds up to a blazing 55 MPH (hey, this is a coupla tons o' iron, here, bub), blasting enemy helicopters and tanks in Europe, the Middle East, South America and even Alaska (when was the last time you heard of an Eskimo insurrection?). Controlling the behemoth is surprisingly easy and, thanks to the wonder of CD sound effects, the tank sounds amazingly like, well, a tank. The instrument panel in the cockpit is pretty sharp, but the poorly-acted FMV cut scenes are barely watchable thanks to pixels the size of mobile homes. Skip the cinemas

don't do this

Never get a bunch of friends to always carry screwdrivers and slowly dismantle your school.



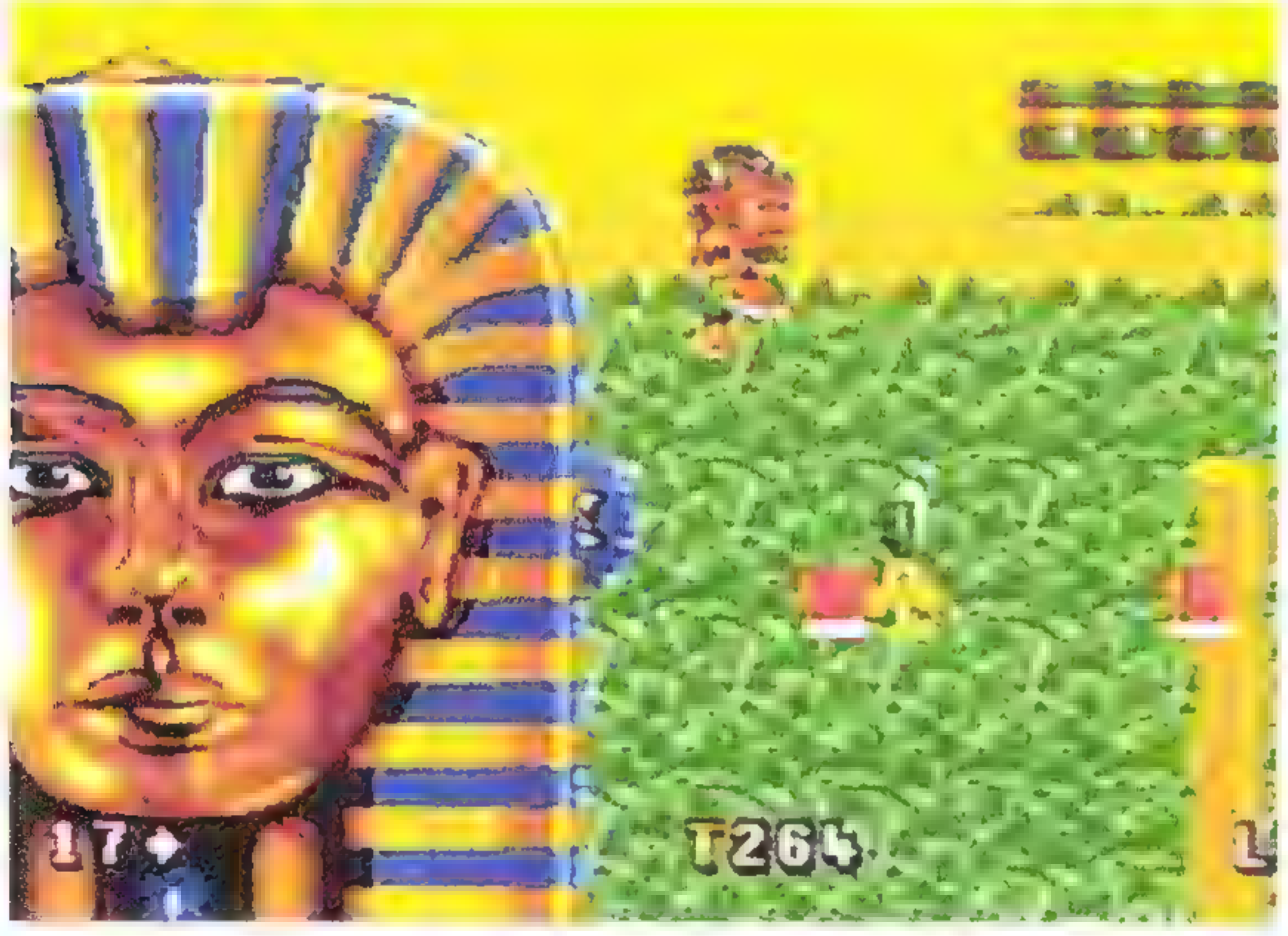


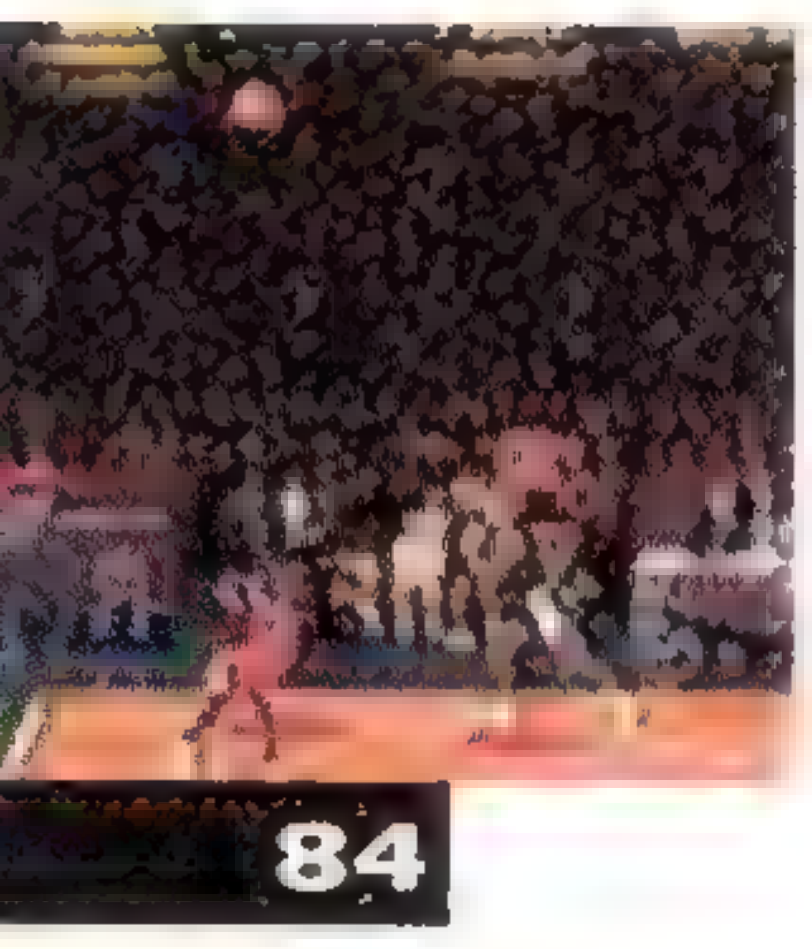
and you can enjoy this easy-handling tank sim. **—DAN AMRICH**

SYSTEM: Sega CD
MANUFACTURER: Absolute
GRAPHICS: C+
CONTROL: A
SOUND: C+
SAVE/PASSWORD: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B

ZOOL 2

As platform/action *Sonic*-knockoff games go, *Zool 2* is a real winner. Bright colors, cute, circus-like tunes, frenetic gameplay and more damn powerups than you could ever imagine. Problem is, do we really need this on the mighty Jaguar, especially now that carts like *DOOM*, *Alien Vs. Predator* and *Iron Soldier* have demonstrated the true power of the 64-bit system? *Zool 2* is a fine platform jumper if that's your thing, and would have made a decent Genesis cart a few years ago—but as a Jag game, it only makes you sit there, scratch your head and ask, "Why?"**—JK**

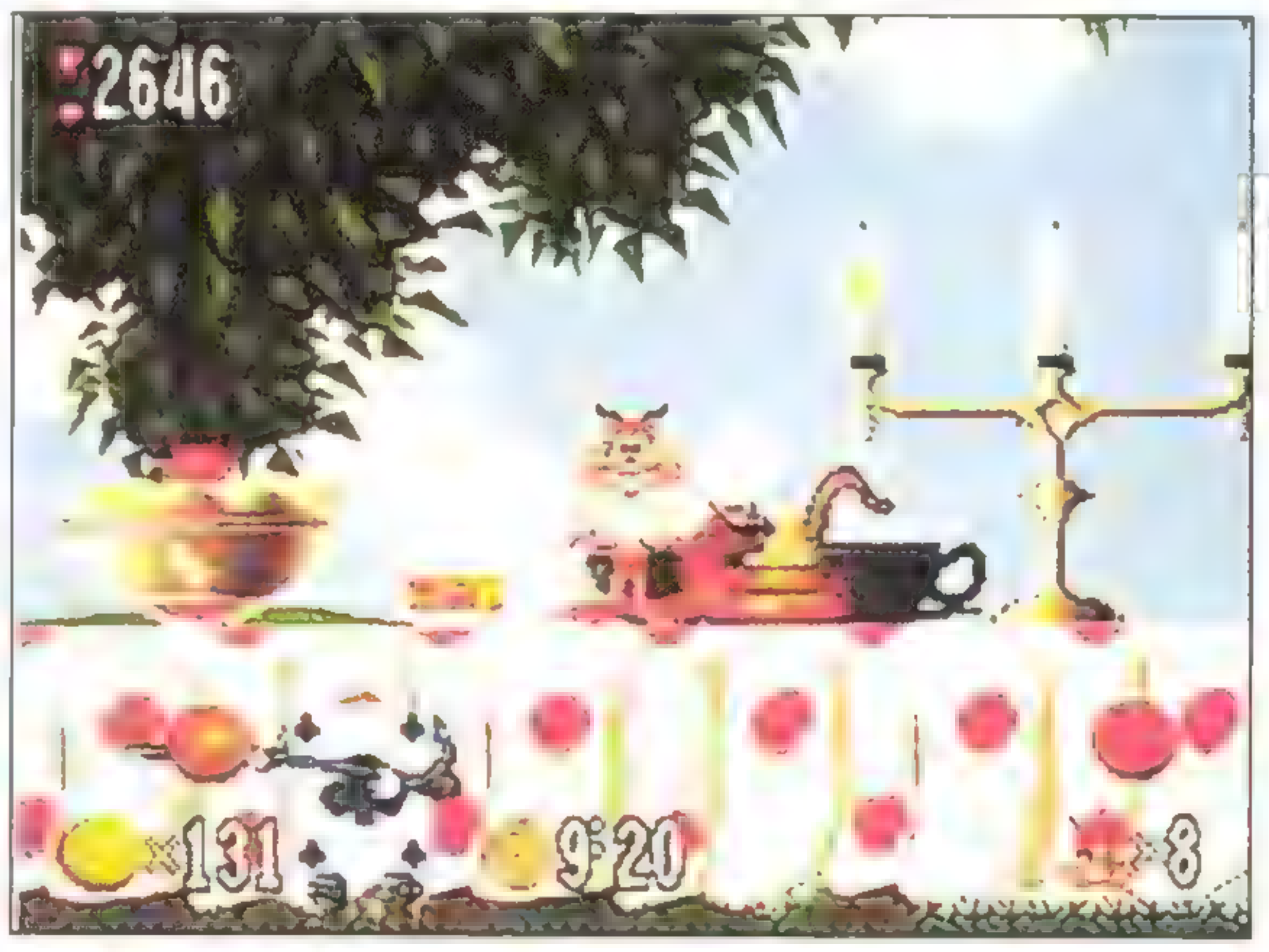




SYSTEM: Jaguar
MANUFACTURER: Atari
GRAPHICS: B
CONTROL: C+
SOUND: C
SAVE/PASSWORD: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: B-

BUBSY: IN FRACTURED FURRY TALES

When the original *Bubsy* game debuted two years ago for the SNES, it gave platform games a much-needed kick in the ass. Great animations, massive worlds to explore, smooth gameplay and tons of cool secrets made *Bubsy* a welcome addition to the platform/action genre. With that in mind, it comes as a major surprise that this all-new *Bubsy* adventure for the Atari Jaguar is so hellaciously bad. Granted, the Jag's huge color palette and graphic capabilities gives *Bubsy* an impressively rich look. However, the action is way, *way* slow and at times so jerky you'll feel like your Jag is on the fritz. And worst of all, one touch of an enemy causes Bubsy to die and start at the beginning of a level. *One* touch! Lame.**—JK**



SYSTEM: Jaguar
MANUFACTURER: Atari
GRAPHICS: A-
CONTROL: D
SOUND: C
SAVE/PASSWORD: Yes
BUY/RENT: Rent
OVERALL: C

THEME PARK

Gamers who've never played a good sim probably live by the creedo, "If I can't shoot it, fly it, or bodyslam it, what good is it?" Well, that's what I used to think before popping in EA's *Theme Park* for the 3DO. While the concept of building and running an amusement park might not sound too inviting, the truth is that *Theme Park* is more of an long-term obsession than a quick thrill. The plot of the game is simple: open up a park and keep it from going bankrupt. But running a successful park is no easy task. You'll need to manage your money, build rides and concession stands, hire a staff, plant trees, make sure that bathrooms are appropriately marked, make repairs and do just about anything else necessary to keep the park alive. Want to make more money on soda? Then use less ice. Or just raise the salt content in the french fries to make your patrons thirsty. Just don't put the food stands too close to the big rides, or kids'll be pukin' left and right.

SYSTEM: 3DO
MANUFACTURER: Electronic Arts
GRAPHICS: B
CONTROL: A-
SOUND: B-
SAVE/PASSWORD: Yes
BUY/RENT: Buy
OVERALL: B+

don't do this
Sour milk smells bad. So never spill a carton of milk in an inconspicuous corner of your school. And never do it before a long, holiday weekend.

comix

All Reviews By Chris Golden

GODWHEEL #0

Malibu/Ultraverse

Written by Ulm & Danko, penciled by Pacella, Benefiel & Conroy, inked by Moore, Amash & Gates

The use of hot artists like Pacella to bring a new audience to the Ultraverse was a smart idea, but linking with a property of *Godwheel's* quality and complexity was even smarter. On the surface, it may seem like a WWF event, or an old superhero slugfest like Marvel's *Contest Of Champions*, but there's more here than that. The art is strong, and the Godwheel itself is an idea with infinite potential if Malibu uses it correctly over the years. Add to this their intention to introduce Thor and Loki from the Marvel universe, and you've got a big winner. And it certainly helps that the miniseries can be read and enjoyed without any previous knowledge of the Ultraverse.

RARE BIT FIENDS #1-#5

King Hell Press

Written and illustrated by Rick Veitch

As addictive as any hallucinogen, *Rare Bit Fiends* is Veitch's personal dream diary in comic book form. Moving with the weird rhythm of dreams, the book is packed with bizarre and funny bits and single images that are eerily reminiscent of dreams you might have had. In fact, reading this comic might induce strange dreams if you don't already have them. Most amusing is the fact that Veitch often dreams about his friends and acquaintances in the comic book field, chief among them Steve Bissette, Dave Sim, Alan Moore, and Neil Gaiman, who supplies back up stories in several issues featuring his own dreams. For a bit of something different, pick this up. If your retailer doesn't carry it, you can write to: King Hell Press, PO Box 1371, West Townshend, VT 05359.

NICK FURY/ BLACK WIDOW: DEATH DUTY

Marvel

Written by Cefn Ridout, illustrated by Charles Adlard

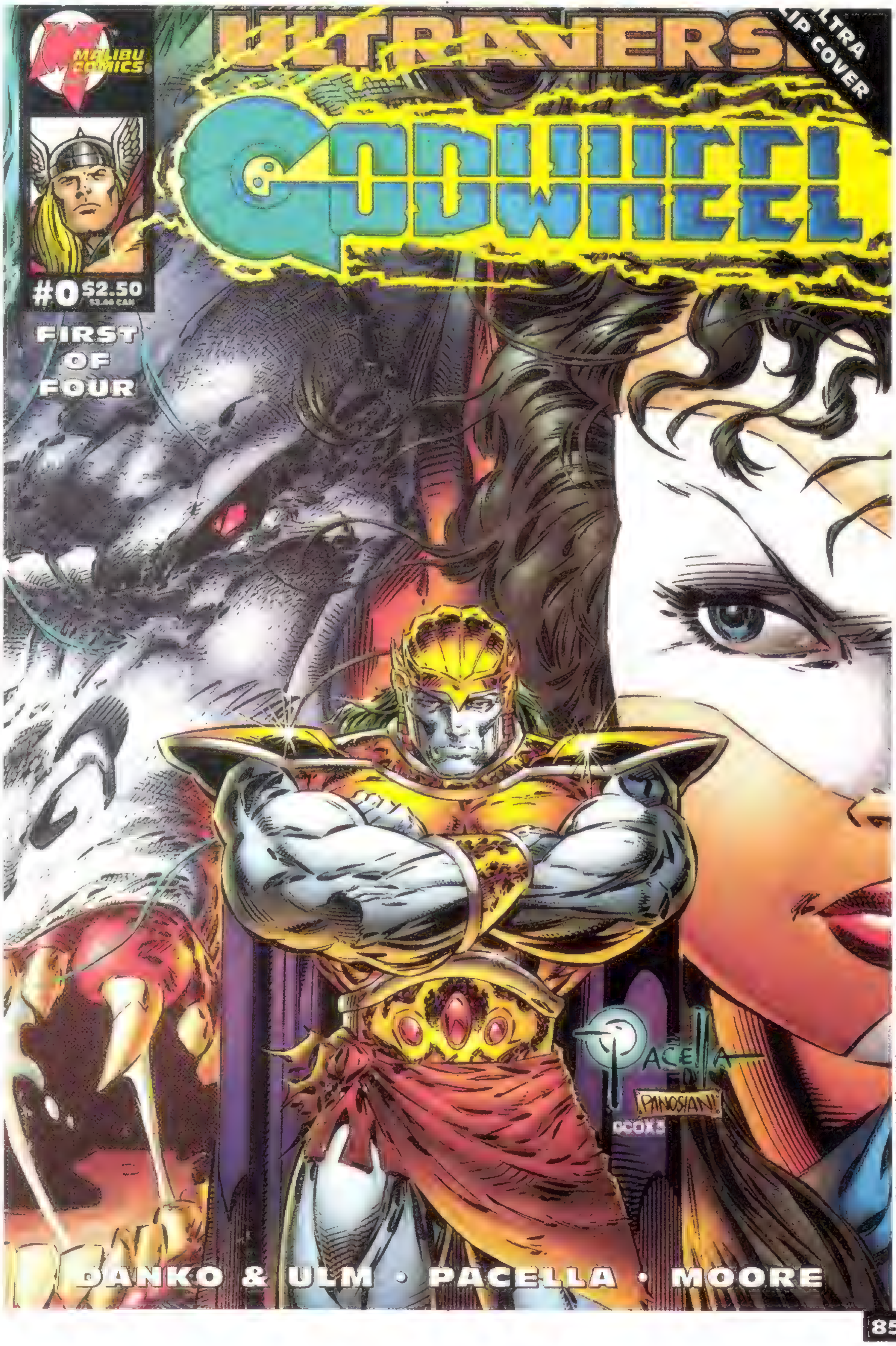
Originally created for the now defunct *Marvel Comics Presents*, this 64-page bookshelf edition is being released to coincide with the first issue of *Fury Of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (also reviewed in this issue). A complex and intriguing tale of modern Russia's Mafia and the reappearance of a vigilante long thought dead (Night Raven), this Nick Fury and Black Widow crossover suffers from several unfortunate flaws. For starters, though Charles Adlard's art is well suited to the locale and the Night Raven portion of the story, his Black Widow is far too masculine and unattractive. Second, and most importantly, the character appears on only six pages, four of them via a videophone conference with the Widow. It's worth the read, especially for Black Widow fans, but Marvel'sdoing some false advertising here.

EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS' TARZAN: THE LOST ADVENTURE #1

Dark Horse

Written by Edgar Rice Burroughs & Joe R. Landsdale w/illustrations by Tom Yeates

Anyone who saw *Pulp Fiction* and didn't know what the title meant can learn a thing or two from this book. At one time, "Pulp" referred to adventure stories published in a magazine format with accompanying illustrations spaced throughout. Dark Horse has revived the pulp medium to showcase the release of a never-before-published story by Tarzan creator Burroughs. The story was originally unfinished, and Lansdale, best known for his work on Jonah Hex, has



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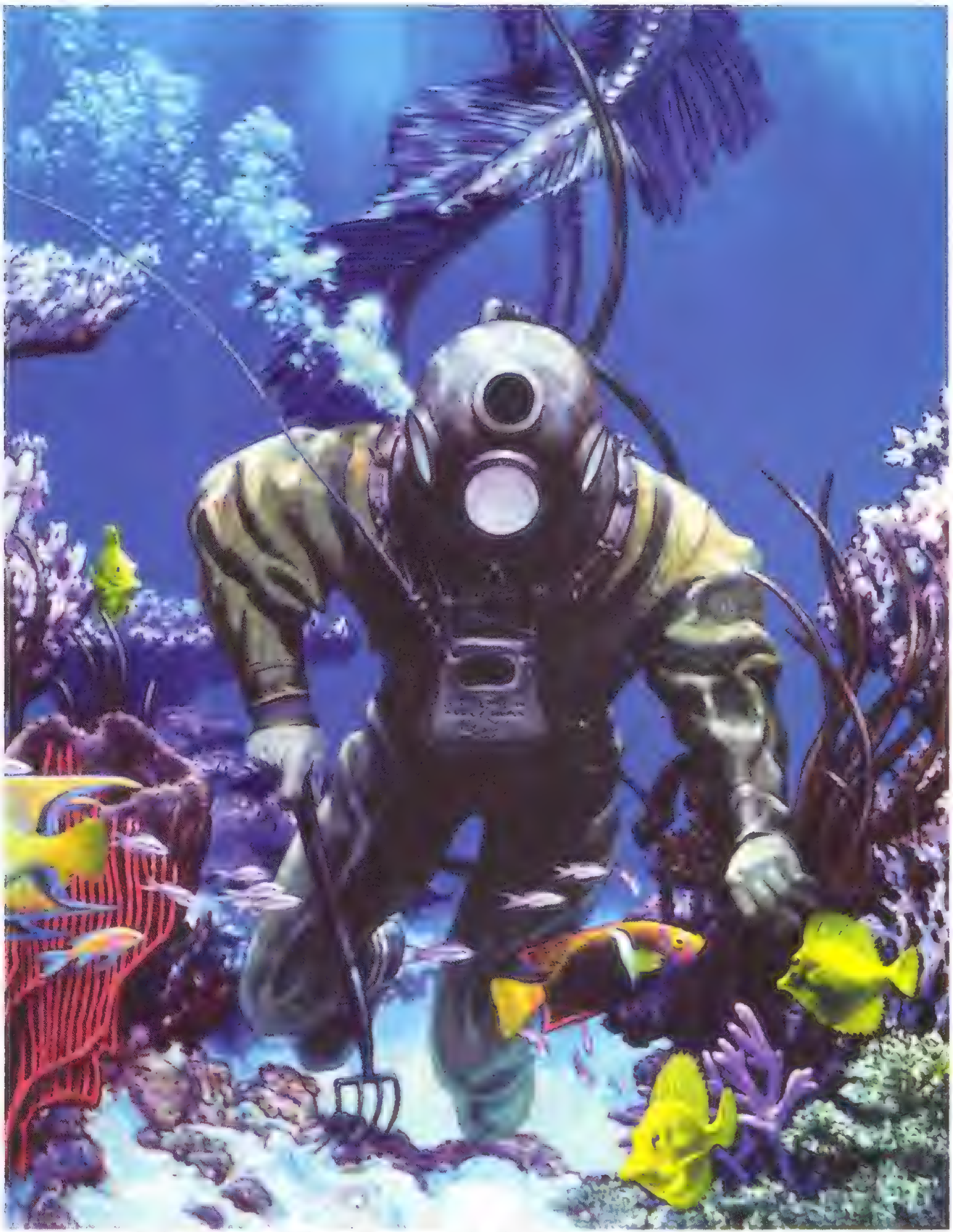


unmistakably left his mark here, especially in the dialogue. Yeates' illustrations are beautiful, and future issues promise equally excellent work from Charles Vess, Gary Gianni and Mike Kaluta. With the *Tarzan vs. Predator At The Earth's Core* miniseries on the way, this promises to be highly collectible.

HARLAN ELLISON'S DREAM CORRIDOR SPECIAL

Dark Horse

Adapted and illustrated by Len Wein, Faye Perozich, Doug Wildey, Pat Broderick and others

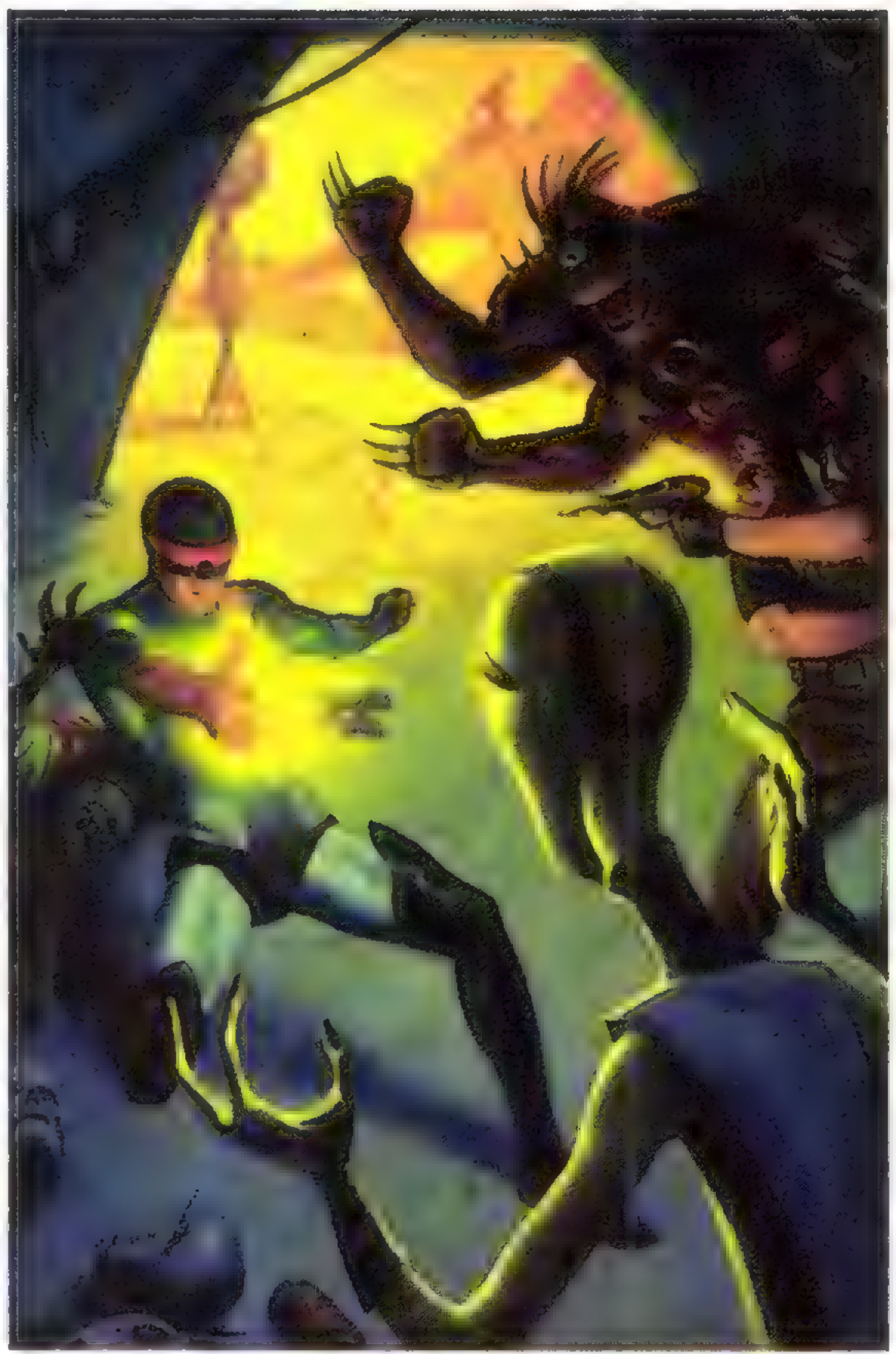
Ellison is one of the most respected, and widely considered one of the most cantankerous, writers in the world of fiction today. Anyone who watches the Sci-Fi Channel will have long since realized that he has an opinion on everything...and so should you! Ellison is a master fantasist, and this special adapting several of his short stories is vastly entertaining. Each story is its own beast, enjoyable for a different reason. The standout here is some of the last painted work by the late Doug Wildey, creator of *Johnny Quest*. March will bring the first issue of a regular *Dream Corridor* series, as Ellison has over a thousand stories from which to choose.

NEXUS: WAGES OF SIN #1

Dark Horse

Written by Mike Baron, illustrated by Steve Rude

For the uninitiated, Nexus is essentially an interstellar bounty hunter/peace officer with lightning/electric powers whose dreams lead him to his prey. Pretty cool stuff, actually, and the character has been around for years. This miniseries, by the creators of Nexus, has a complete story in each issue. The first, "The Client," features our hero on the trail of a mass murderer called Osgood Bad. The writing is



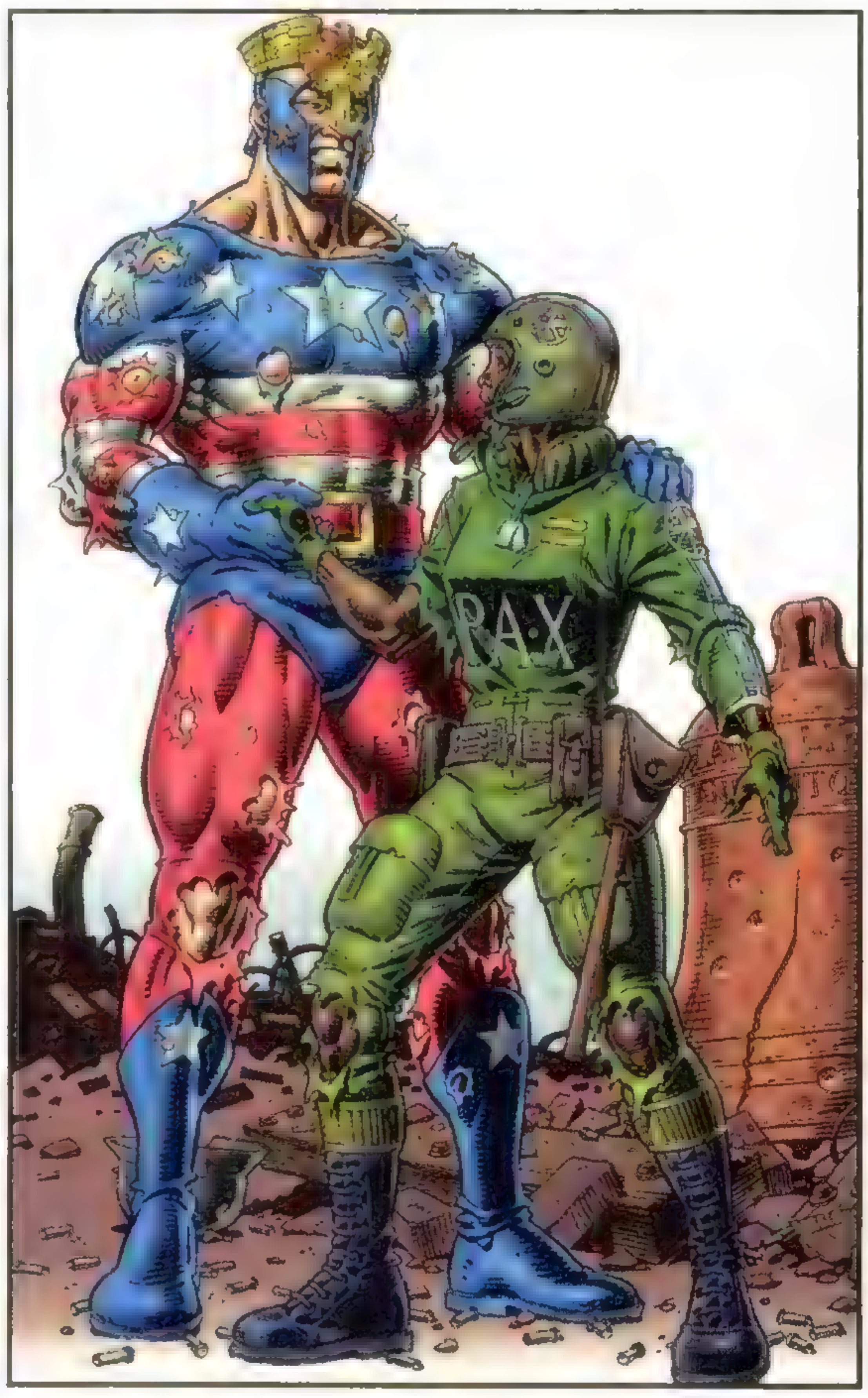
sharp and Steve Rude's awesome art is, as always, immediately recognizable. The only drawback, if you can call it that, is that there isn't much action in this issue.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MARTHA WASHINGTON

Dark Horse

Written by Frank Miller, illustrated by Dave Gibbons

All of Miller and Gibbons' "Martha Washington" stories have been staunchly anti-war, simultaneously cynical and hopeful, sad yet often amusing. A terribly depressing vision of the future, the world of Martha Washington is presented in three tales here, in time for the fic-



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tional character's birth date of March 11, 1995. A sobering reminder of the utter stupidity that frequently infects people in power, Miller and Gibbons are once again at the top of their form. This one-shot easily surpasses the recent *Martha Washington Goes To War*.

COLD BLOODED: THE SLAYER #1

Northstar

Written by Rafael Nieves, illustrated by Vincent Proce

The words "vampire comic" are bound to instill skepticism in anyone who's been reading Marvel's vampire books lately. This is something different, with a dark humor all its own. The art is gritty, reminiscent of Vertigo, but not up to that level. Told mostly from the perspective of a woman whose childhood memories include an insect crawling from a hole in the head of a man with whom she is conversing (the main vampire character, Tom Coker), and featuring the aftermath of a bloody nightclub massacre, "The Slayer" has the words "film script" written all over it. Toss in a brewing war between the vampire and a local street gang, and you've got a winner.

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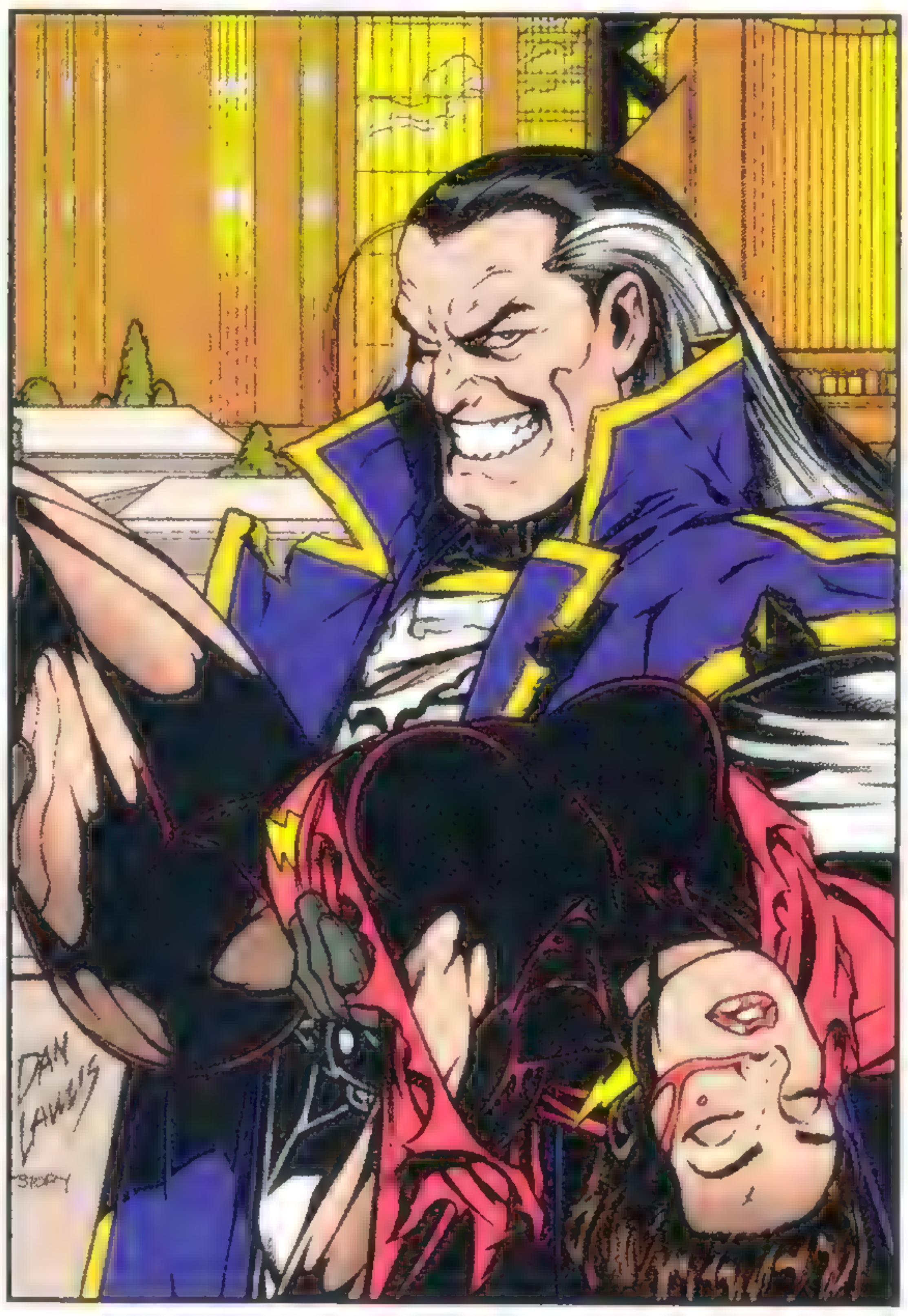
AGENTS OF LAW #1

Dark Horse

Written by Keith Giffen & Lovern Kindzierski, penciled by Dan Lawlis, inked by Ian Akin

This *Comics Greatest World* follow-up to *Catalyst: Agents Of Change* brings us a new status quo. Golden City has seceded from the U.S., but now its leader, Grace, is missing. When a stranger shows up with her corpse, claiming to be her lover, he is quickly named leader of Golden City. Though members of Golden City's superhero team are suspicious, the mystery man is quick to eliminate any who threaten his rule. In no time, the city is under the control of a madman who has the will of the people behind him. What's a superhero to do? Even those not well versed in the quirky *CGW* will be impressed by this first issue.



PHANTOM #1 & #2

Marvel

Written by Dave DeVries, illustrated by Glen Lumsden

Anyone prepared to pass off Marvel's new takes on such classic characters is going to be way off base. The art nearly whistles with the speed of its action, and the script is sharp and nasty at times. The story revolves around a corporation's attempt to gain mineral rights in a protected area of a nation called Bangala, but in the jungle mountains lives a tribe protected by generation after generation of men wearing the

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mantle of the Phantom, the Ghost Who Walks. We'll all be lucky if DeVries and Lumsden end up doing one of the *Batman* books—their sensibilities are perfect for it.

DOCTOR STRANGE #76

Marvel

Written by David Quinn, illustrated by Peter Gross

Doctor Strange has been written by many people over the decades, but each writer unfailingly fell into a comfortable familiarity. Even more so than other characters, Doc was rarely allowed to change, and when he did, he was quickly changed back again. David Quinn has broken the mold, gradually showing us a story that would make it impossible for Strange to emerge unchanged. Issue #76 is where it all comes together, showing a new status quo for a classic character: new costume, new attitude, new powers (a new source for his magic), new concerns. He has also set up subplots which should last for the foreseeable future. The art by Peter Gross is reminiscent of DC's Vertigo titles, dark and stylish. This is unlike anything else Marvel is publishing. Read it.

ELEKTRA: ROOT OF EVIL #1

Marvel

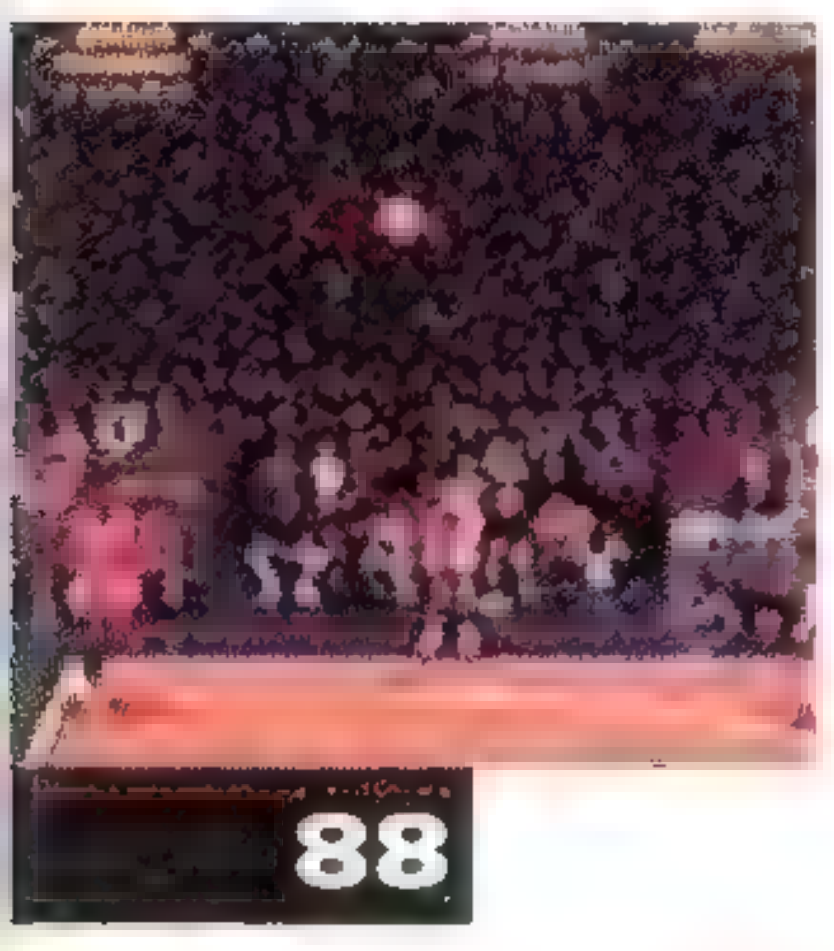
Written by D.G. Chichester, illustrated by Scott McDaniel

Though her return in the pages of Daredevil was fairly confusing, Elektra's latest miniseries puts her squarely in the spotlight once again. Chichester is uneven as a writer, but this first issue has him at his peak, showcasing a new Elektra, a woman brought back from the dead but with no meaning in her life. She crusades for justice, but is alone and lonely. McDaniel has been the subject of great fan debate recently. Some believe him to be "great" and others are turned off by his work. Both reactions are understandable in light of recent work, but in these pages, where he's obviously taken his time and is apparently inking himself, his work kicks ass.

KISS CLASSICS

Marvel

Written by Macchio, Weiss & Gerber, illustrated by Buscema, Romita, et al



Like most of Marvel's (and other publishers') attempts at turning rock musicians into superheroes, the two comic books included in this trade paperback are really silly. The original members of KISS, Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Paul Stanley and Peter Criss each have personalities stolen from other Marvel heroes. Ace is the Reed Richards or Hank McCoy of the group, Gene the Thing or Wolverine, Paul the Human Torch or Havok and Peter the Spider-Man or Nightcrawler. Despite their drawbacks, the two stories (the first of which sends the "heroes" against Doctor Doom) are a lot of fun and a great example of the excitement that surrounded the band during the Seventies.

FURY OF S.H.I.E.L.D. #1

Marvel

Written by Howard Chaykin, penciled by Corky Lehmkuhl, inked by Mark McKenna

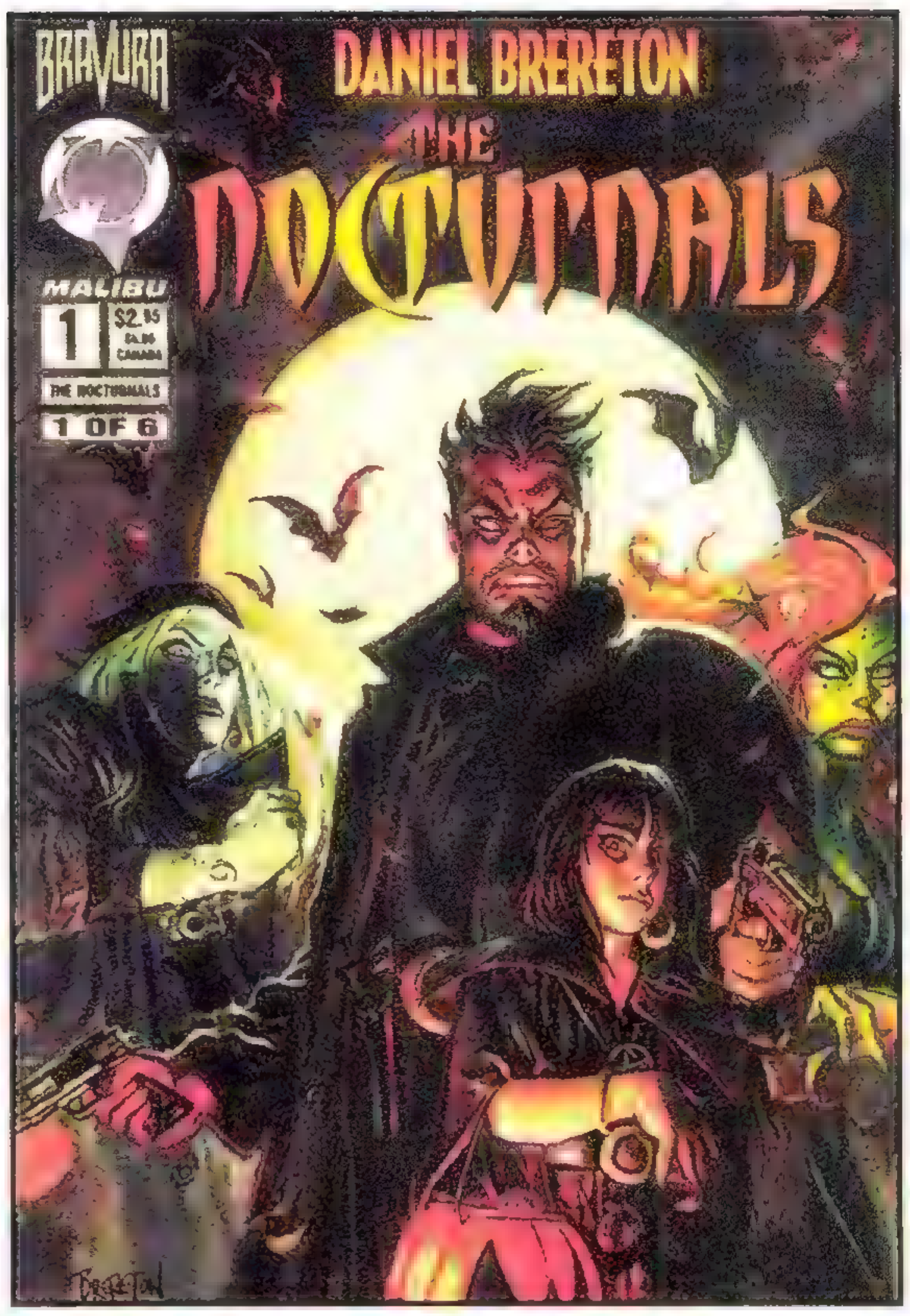
Nick Fury has always been a great supporting character in the Marvel universe, jumping from book to book, appearing when you least expect it. He was a man of mystery. The most recent attempt to revive him lasted a couple of years but was incredibly misguided in its presentation. Fury is not about super powers. Never was. Chaykin does an admirable job with Fury, bringing in his son, Scorpio, and fortunately continuing to include Nick's longtime love, the Countess. Chaykin has a caustic wit, but it seems more gentle here, coming out most in the scenes where Fury is told he must quit smoking in order to maintain his health insurance. The art by newcomer Lehmkuhl is top notch, which is a relief considering a lot of the dreck that's hit the stands lately.

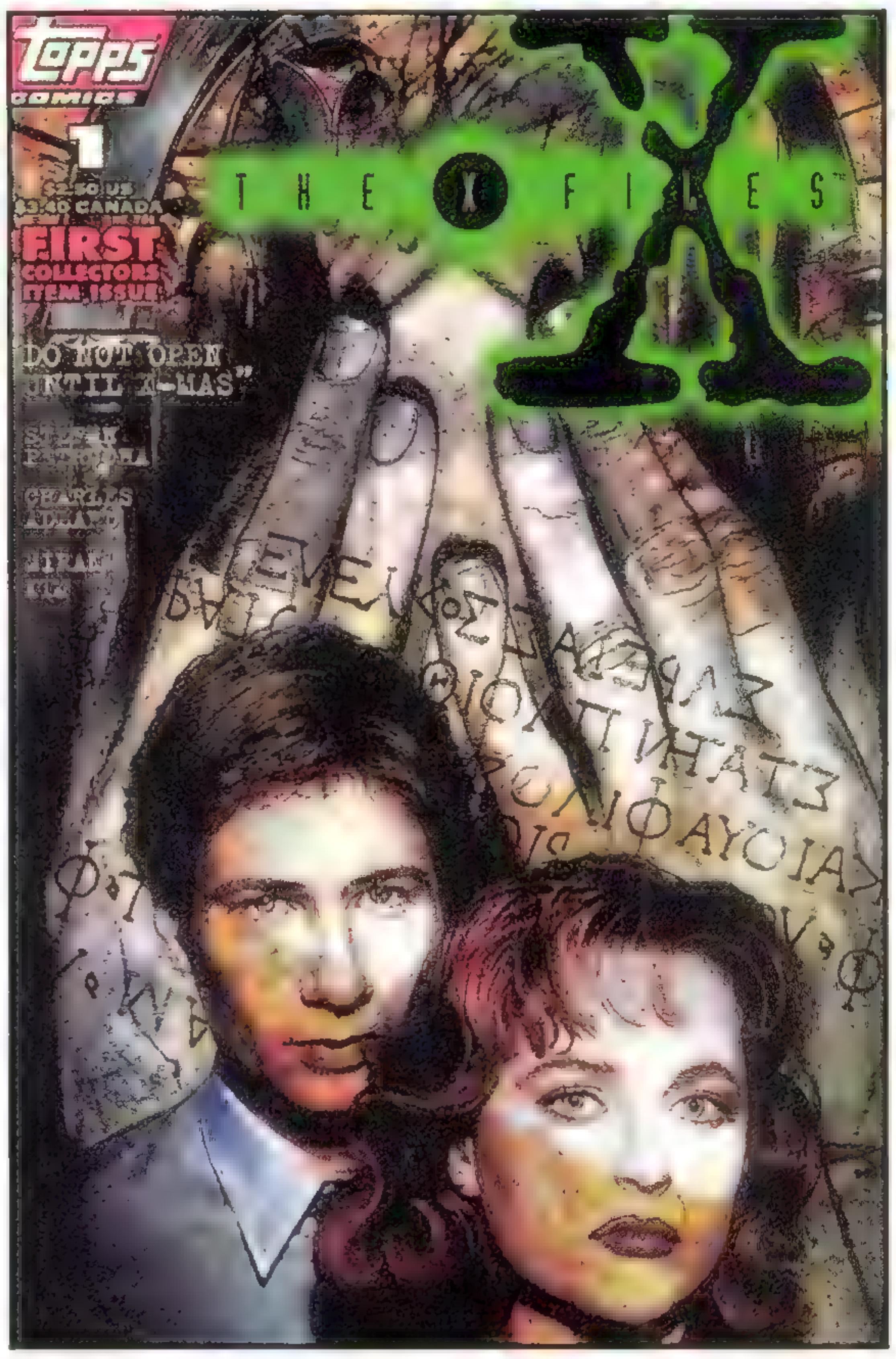
NOCTURNALS #1 & #2

Malibu/Bravura

Written and illustrated by Daniel Brereton

One word...wow! Ever since Brereton first appeared with Eclipse Comics' *Black Terror*, he's been one of the best and most distinctive painters in the business. Now we finally see a series he has created, and all our suspicions are true...nobody does criminals and monsters like Daniel Brereton. The story featured in issues #1 and #2 of *Nocturnals* contains squid-like parasitic aliens, bio-engineered humanoid dragons and raccoons, ancient Earth races, zombie assassins, pyrokinetic androids, poltergeists, mafia underlings...and a guy called Doc Horror. And that's just the first issue. The story is a blast, and the painted art spills off the page like a ruptured vein.





X-FILES #1

Topps

Written by Stefan Petrucha, illustrated by Charles Adlard

If you're a fan of the *X-Files* TV show, you'll probably enjoy this title. Petrucha has managed to capture the spirit of the show, its characters and dialogue, throughout most of the first issue. The story is about a legendary church document called the Fatima Prophecy. Adlard's art is another story. He is certainly competent and his style works very nicely in most scenes here. And, to his credit, he is able to passably reproduce the face of TV series star David Duchovny. Unfortunately, his "Scully" looks nothing like Gillian Anderson, who plays the role on television. The art on

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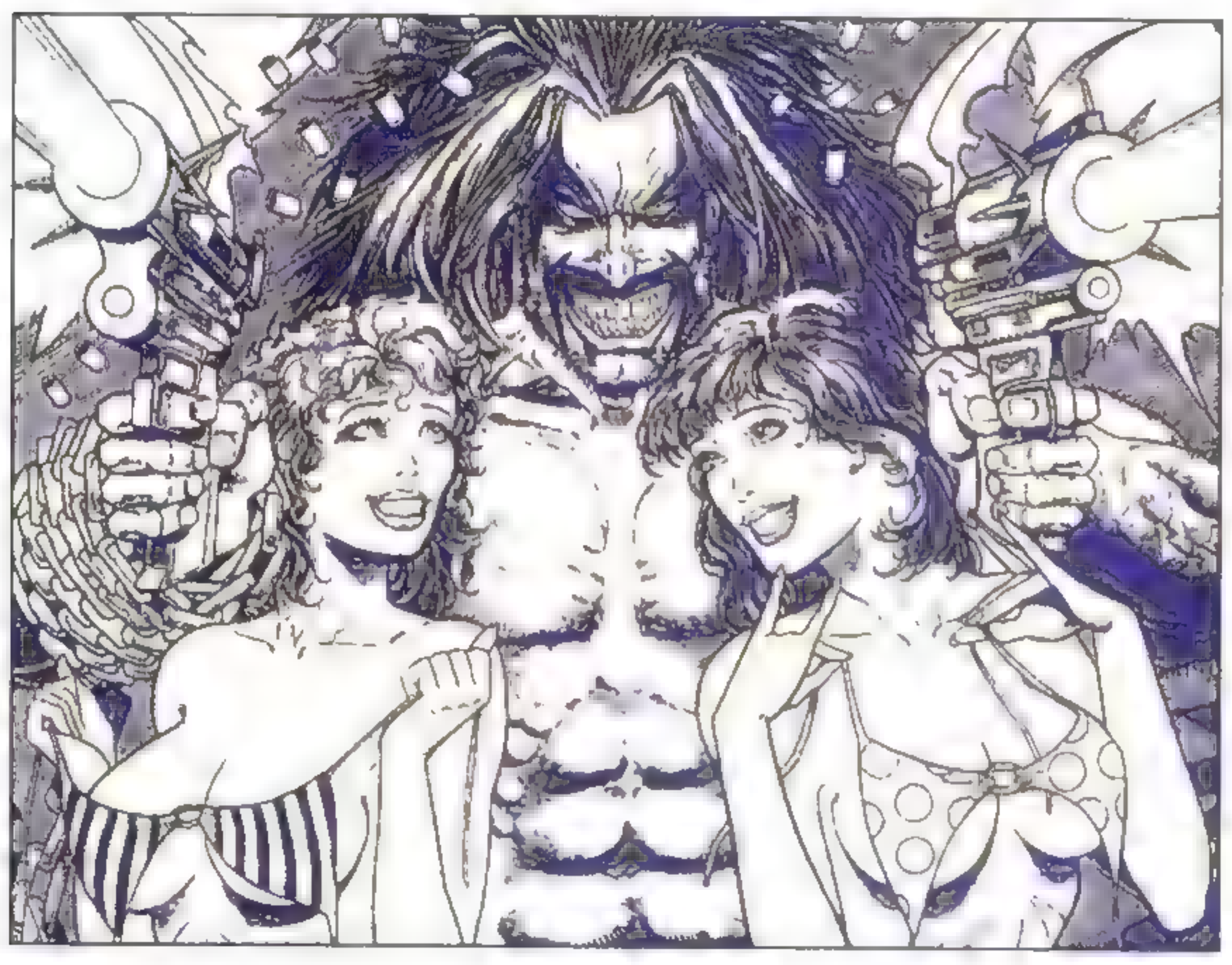
this title needs to be much sharper than it is, to lend at least some of the realism present in the series.

LOBO'S BIG BABE SPRING BREAK SPECIAL

DC

Written by Alan Grant, illustrated by Jim Balent

Lobo, probably the least politically-correct character in mainstream comics, and joyously so, gets the moonlighting job of his life...playing bodyguard to the contestants in the intergalactic Miss Voluptua beauty pageant, who are in danger of attack by dozens of politically-correct terrorist groups! *Catwoman* artist Jim Balent has made a name for himself drawing women with gargantuan bra sizes, and here he outdoes himself. As usual with Grant's writing on the character, this one-shot is hysterically funny, good enough for a giggle from even those who never read humorous comics.

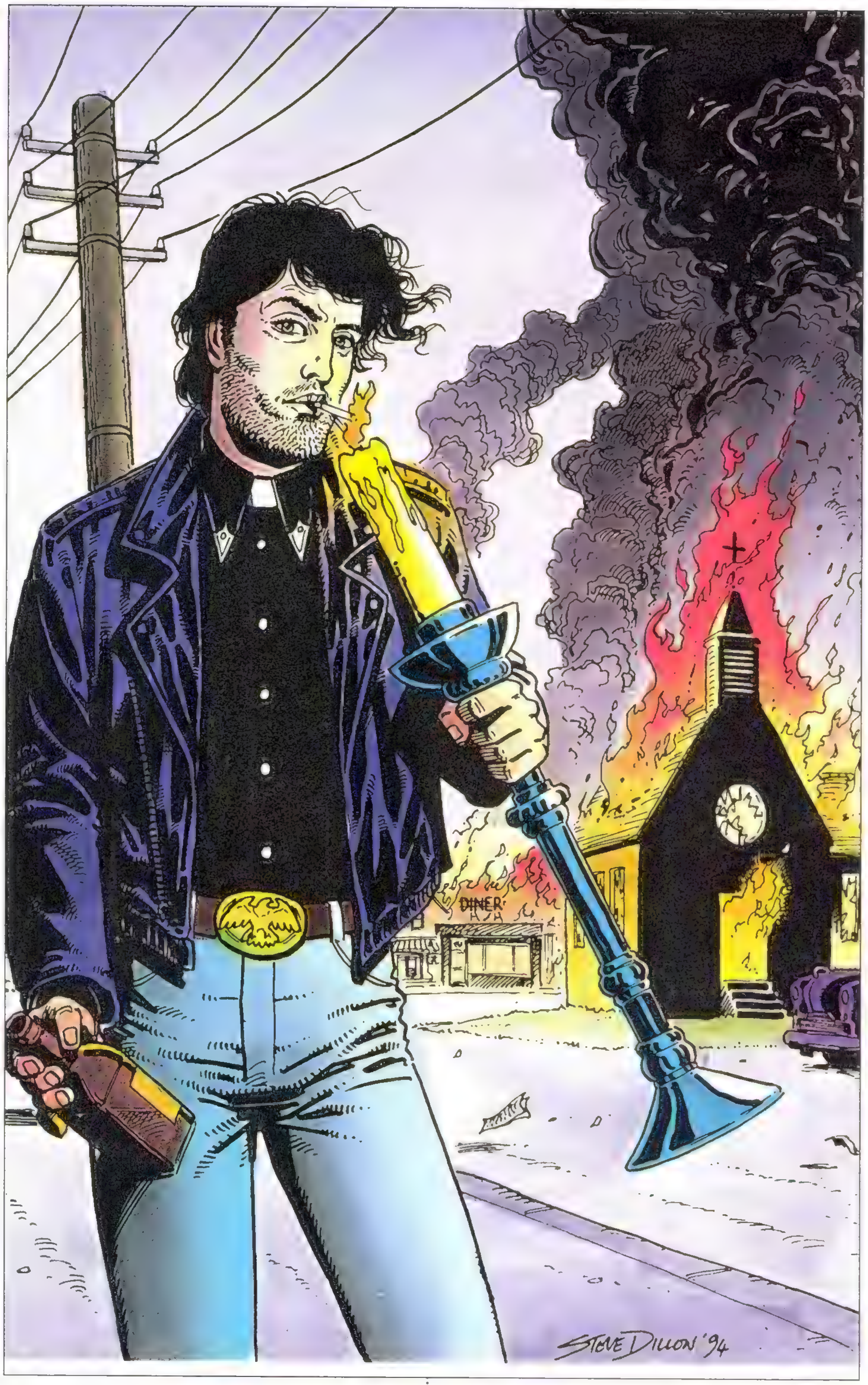


PSYBA-RATS

DC

Written by Chuck Dixon, penciled by Dutkiewicz & Kent, inked by Bob McLeod

Now that Fabian Nicieza has cut down, Chuck Dixon wins hands down for most comic books written each month. It's amazing that he is able to keep any quality to them at all, and yet each is at the very least packed with excitement. *Psyba-Rats*, which features Robin in a guest shot, is a miniseries following the exploits of Bloodpack member Razorsharp and a couple of her friends. The art sings, and the story moves along well, the characters are fun and the appearance of Robin an extra treat, but there's still something missing here. Perhaps it is because Razorsharp's powers so closely mimic some of the feats of the T-1000 in *Terminator 2*, but the comic simply doesn't impress. It's great while it lasts, but when it's over, it's forgotten.



PREACHER #1

DC/Vertigo

Written by Garth Ennis, illustrated by Steve Dillon

The news that Ennis and Dillon were leaving *Hellblazer* was a crushing blow. Most often, when such a creative team departs, announcing a special project for the next year, little or nothing materializes. Not so with this pair. *Preacher* may well be the best and most commercially viable thing Vertigo has done in years. A minister imbued with the unholy powers of a heavenly creature, his former girlfriend turned assassin and a pompous Irish vampire hit the road to discovery with a gazillion cops and an undead assassin out of a Clint Eastwood western on their trail. It's absolutely insane and would make one hell of a movie. Guaranteed to be one of the best comics of 1995.

LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #71

DC

Written by James Robinson, illustrated by John Watkiss

Robinson has proven to be the best sur-

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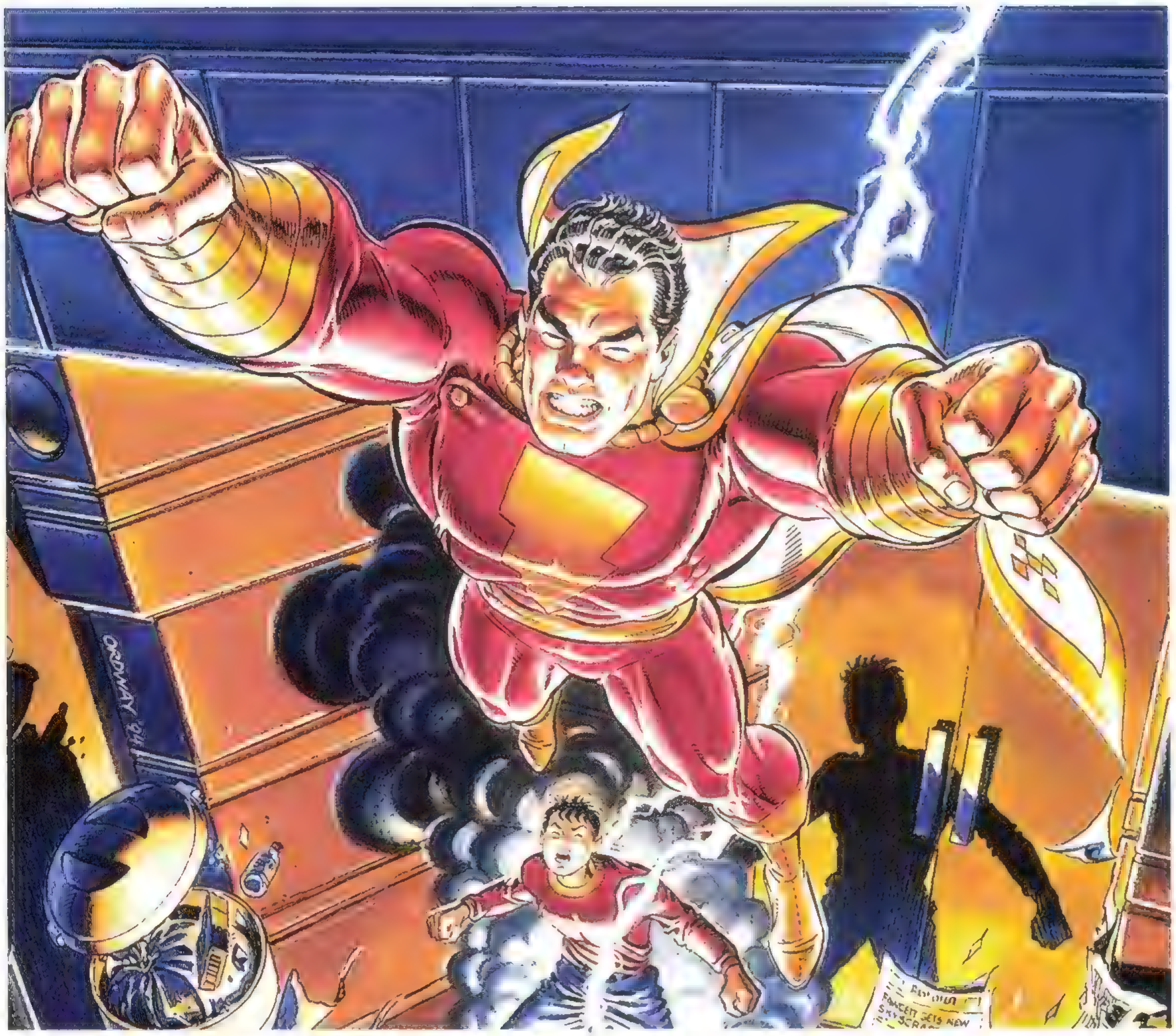


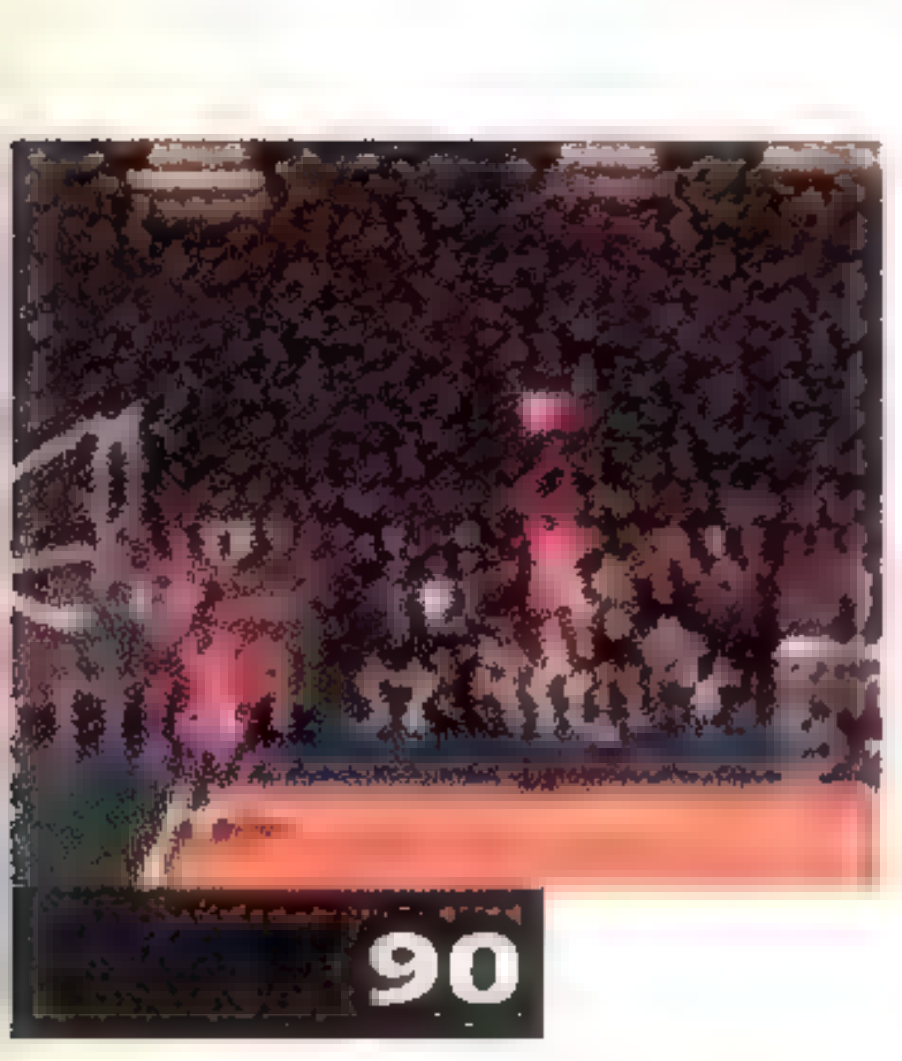
prise of the past year. His work, particularly on *Starman*, has been a real pleasure. Watkiss is a stylish artist far more at home in this title than the more mundane superheroics of the other *Batman* books. Doug Moench and Kelly Jones have had great success with their *Elseworlds Batman* vampire stories, and so it was only a matter of time before someone came along and did Batman versus the werewolves. Robinson and Watkiss pull it off admirably. If you're not interested in reading Batman's monthly adventures, *Legends Of The Dark Knight* is still highly recommended, as it stands on its own, out of continuity.

POWER OF SHAZAM #1

DC

Written by Jerry Ordway, illustrated by Krause & Manley

What is Prime, after all, but a gimmicky version of Captain Marvel? Put Robin and Superman in the same body, and you've got Billy Batson. Though there is nothing particularly challenging about this series, at least in the first issue, one thing is certain: for sheer, unadulterated, mainstream superhero fun, you can't go wrong with *Power Of Shazam*. At one time, this character was the centerpiece for his own superhero sub-universe, and if this title takes off, no doubt DC will be happy to expand his place in their universe the way they have with Superman, Batman, Green Lantern and Flash.



BLACK FLAG #1

Maximum Press

Written by Dan Fraga & Eric Stephenson, illustrated by Dan Fraga

Last year, Image Comics published a black-and-white preview of Dan Fraga's creator-owned *Black Flag*, and received a great response. It's only fitting then, that one of the first projects out of Liefeld's creator-owned company, Maximum Press, is a *Black Flag* series. The first issue, largely a colorized version of the preview with an added ten pages of material, is a helluva lot of fun. It has a little bit of everything, a talking gorilla/warrior, a super-powered mercenary, a large-breasted bad girl, a pair of goofy little kids who dream of being heroes...oh, and demons. Fraga walks a fine line between pandering to what is currently hot in the superhero market , and parodying it, and that balance is *Black Flag*'s standout quality.

THE FRANKENSTEIN/DRACULA WAR #1

Topps

Written by Roy Thomas & JM L'Officier, penciled by Claude St. Aubin, inked by Allen Nunis

Most of Topps' movie spinoffs have been beautifully executed, but in one way or another were bogged down by their relationship to the film they adapted or continued. This is another story. Ignoring any relationship to the recent films and the comics adapted from them, this crossover is intelligently written by two men who know the characters and the history involved. A third historical figure, the mysterious Count de Saint Germain, who legends purport was an immortal alchemist, is brought into play as well, and in fact, ends up being the reason the monsters finally meet. St. Aubin's art is well-suited for the tale, and the cover by Mike Mignola ought to rope in his fans as well. Even if you haven't enjoyed, or bothered to look at, Topps' other movie tie-ins, check this one out. You won't be sorry.

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BLANK: THE ENCEPHALON VOID #1

Artery Ent.

Written by C. Brent Ferguson and Bill Schacht, illustrated by Ferguson

Starting out with a sweet cover is a great idea, and independent comics do it all the time. Unfortunately, most of their contents aren't nearly as good as the covers promise. This is. Ferguson's black-and-white art is loaded with dark anger, and the over-the-top anti-Catholic storyline, which features a man so driven by hatred that he erases every other bit of information his brain has stored, is crisp and sneeringly cynical. Most importantly, the comic comes complete with a CD full of eyeball-searing, tooth-shattering industrial music mayhem from Null. Check it out at your local comic shop, or send $8.50 to: Artery Ent., Planetarium Station, P.O. Box 826, NY, NY 10024-0539

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music

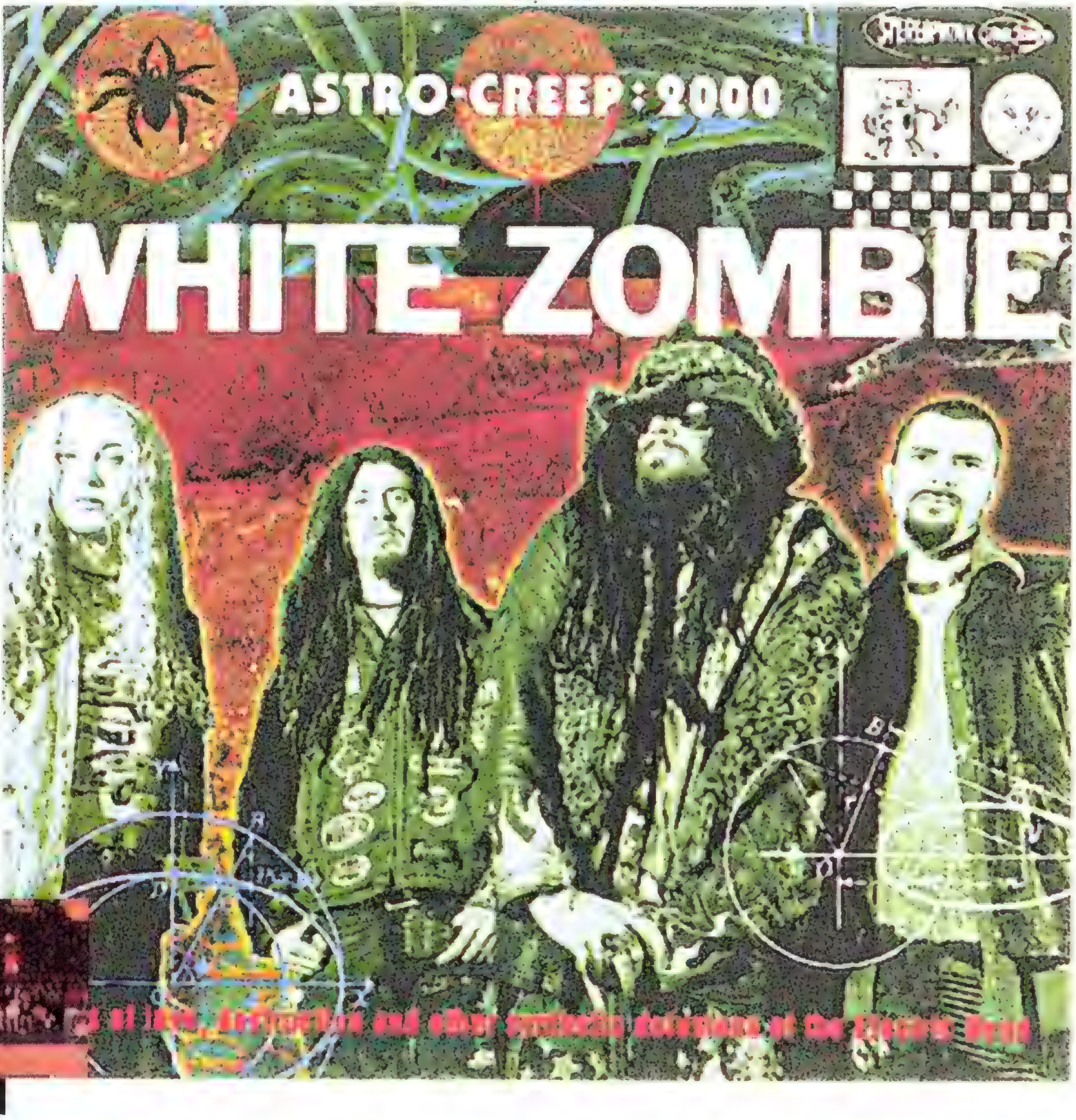
WHITE ZOMBIE

Astro-Creep 2000 Songs Of Love, Destruction And Other Synthetic Delusions Of The Electric Head (Geffen)
****

"Here there is no hope, and consequently no duty, no work, nothing to be gained by praying, nothing to be lost by doing what you like. Hell, in short, is a place where you have nothing to do, but amuse yourself."
—George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950).

Forty-four years after the death of Shaw, his revealing quote comes back to haunt us in the form of White Zombie's latest and release, *Astro-Creep 2000....* Right from the opening strains of "Electric Head Pt. 1 (The Agony)," *Astro-Creep* boils over with monstrously heavy guitars and samples ranging from B-movies to real life tragedies, making it a thoroughly more pungent and unpredictable effort than its 1993 predecessor, *La Sexorcisto*.

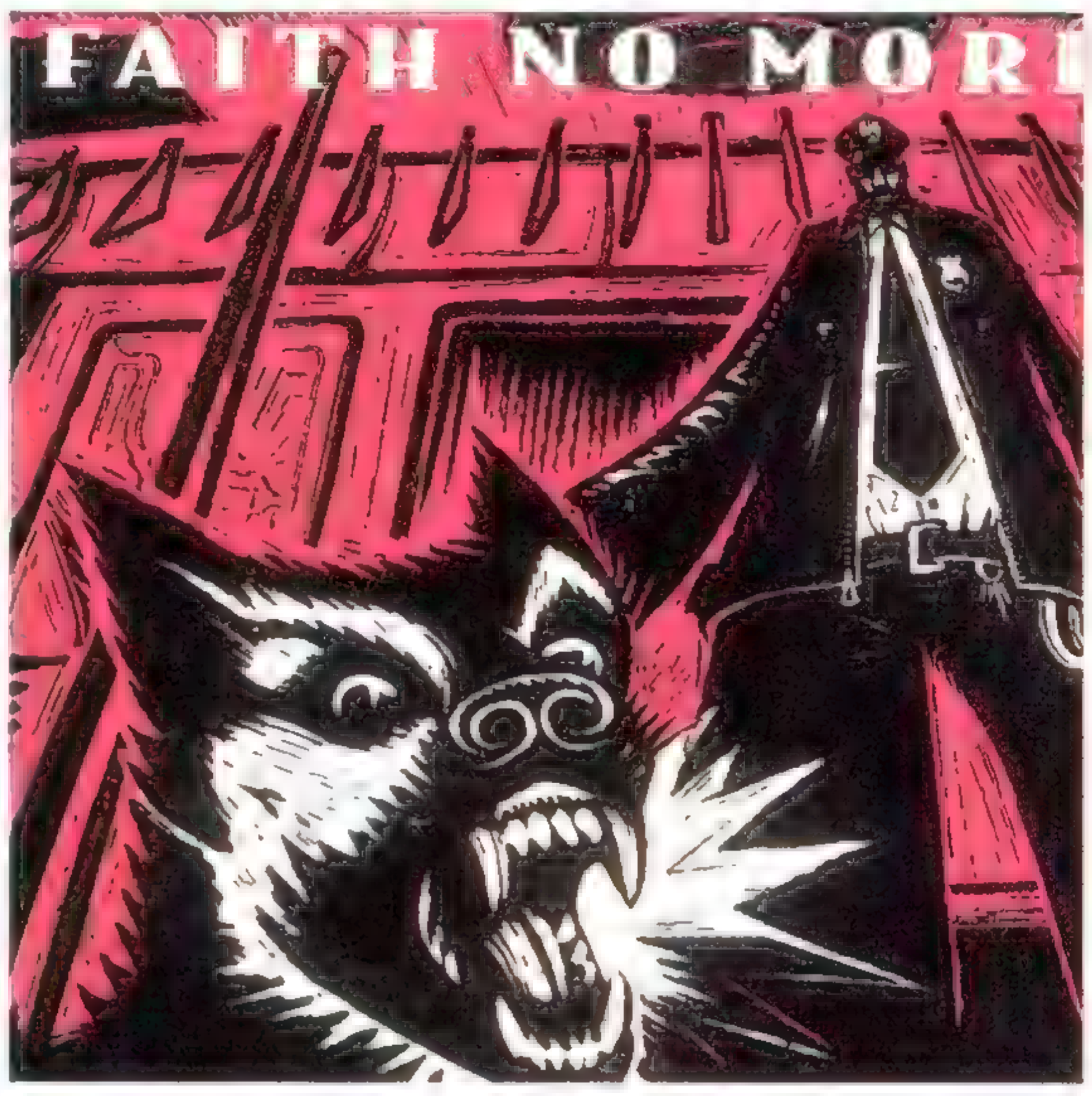
The musicianship is stronger (former Exodus/Testament drummer Joey Tempesta makes a fine showing), the songwriting more daring and the use of samples more effective. Of course, you'll still need a roadmap to understand their lyrics, but that only makes listening to the record an even greater challenge. Abandon all hope, ye who enter here! **—MITCH JOEL**


ASTRO-CREEP: 2000
WHITE ZOMBIE
songs of love, destruction and other synthetic delusions of the electric head

FAITH NO MORE

King For A Day, Fool For A Lifetime (Slash/Reprise)
****

It's been nearly three years since Faith No More last challenged audiences with its twisted brand of metallic noise, and over five since its mammoth "Epic" single launched the band into the mainstream. To a large extent, everything FNM has done since its MTV breakthrough in 1990 has been an attempt to prove the band hasn't gone soft. Sets opening for Billy Idol were permeated with contentious thrash metal songs ill-suited for Idol's crowd, and the band's second major label album, *Angel Dust*, was filled with angular twists and non-melodic flourishes that more closely resembled vocalist Mike Patton's experimental noise band Mr. Bungle than anything in the Top 40.



On its fourth record, *King For A Day, Fool For A Lifetime*, Faith No More remains unclassifiable, mixing a variety of styles including thrash, metal, pop, funk, soul and even country music into its eclectic compositions. But whether grinding out experimental noise, jamming a buzzsaw riff or lurching through a funk-laden labyrinth, the band always emphasizes content over structure. While they may have sacrificed songwriting for the sake of rebellion on

don't do this

It's Saturday morning. But instead of laying in your warm bed, eating a bowl of Cap'n Crunch and watching X-Men on the tube, you're at the school gym—taking your S.A.T.'s with hundreds of other schmucks. You're on the math section, and just as you finally remember what a "denominator" is, the proctor calls time. You're sunk. You've got four more sections to go, but it's no use. You might as well give up. At this point you should just hand your paper in. Never get up and start screaming out the answers (it doesn't even matter if you're right). Everyone in room will have to take the test over again. And they'll have to wait a couple months to do it—and probably miss their college application deadlines.

Angel Dust, new numbers like "Get Out," "Digging The Grave" and "King For A Day" are filled with strong hooks and catchy melodies that belie the band's combative nature, even if lyrics like "It's only funny until someone gets hurt and then it's just hilarious," typify the group's spirit. **—JON WIEDERHORN**

FIGHT

A Small Deadly Space (Epic)

* * * *

The second album from ex-Judas Priest singer Rob Halford's band Fight stays true to the recipe that made the first album, *War Of Words*, such a mosh-mad metal threat: huge, no-nonsense riffs, propulsive, dead-on grooves and Halford's majestic, grab-you-by-the-throat vocals. One key element, however, is sorely missing, and that's the band's former lead guitarist, Russ Parrish, whose shreddin', melodic solos provided *War Of Words* with lots of its punch. Nevertheless, the wealth of sturdy, highly crushing riffs on songs like "Legacy Of Hate," "Beneath The Violence" and "Human Crate" should leave you volume-addicted maniacs feeling plenty high. Warning: This album does contain one love ballad: the haunting and beautiful "In A World Of My Own Making," which demonstrates that Halford can kick butt with or without those loud guitars. Plenty of fight here. **—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER**

fight
a small deadly space

BELLY

KING (Sire/Warner Bros.)

***1/2

With *KING*, Belly expand upon the eccentric, power-pop formula they created with their previous effort, *Star*, back in 1992. But *KING* is less sonically intense and more musically upbeat than its predecessor. Tanya Donelly is still the band's cornerstone, her whispy, girlish vocals floating in and out of the rich, textured mix of crisp guitars and airtight bass and drum-fortified rhythms.

The album kicks off with "Puberty," Tanya's swirling guitar cutting with clean distortion and lite buzz, turning the tune into a mature, intoxicating whorl. "Seal My Fate" begins with semi-unplugged guitar and a rolling drum undercurrent before shifting into some rockin', phased-out guitar accompanied by driving bass rhythms. It perfectly juxtaposes Tanya's sweet, child-like vocals and aggressive yet playful guitar riffage. Other tracks range from "Super-Connected," which delivers tumble-dry elastic guitar to the drone-like strumming featured on "The Bees." On the album's seven remaining tracks, the solid drumming and sturdy bass work of Chris Gorman and Gail Greenwood keep the beat on the up-n-up, as Tanya and fellow guitarist Tom Gorman continuously trade guitar licks.

It all helps make *KING* a deliciously satisfying piece of work that shows Belly to be stuffed full of musical treats galore. **—SPENCE D.**

FUNKDOOBIEST

Brothas Doobie (Immortal)

* * *

"This is it," alright. Funkdoobiest have clearly spent the last year honing lyrical skills, and nurturing fat beats. Their second project, *Brothas Doobie*, is a cohesive, well-crafted, well-executed album that should have Ralph M. Tomahawk and Son Doobie collecting major props in the year ahead. Representing to the fullest on tracks like "What The Deal," "Dedicated" and "Lost In Thought," these doobie brothas add yet another dimension to the already multifaceted west coast rap scene. And with the single "Rock On" (remixed by Buckwild) blowing up on airwaves nationwide, Funkdoobiest should have quite a year ahead of them. **—TRACII McGREGOR**

FACE TO FACE

Big Choice (Victory)

**1/2

Now that grunge is out and pop-punk is in, a whole new wave of bands are crawling from the basements of suburban mediocrity to seek fame and fortune. One such outfit, Face To Face, has all the ingredients needed to achieve such stardom. In an era that deifies Green Day and Offspring, *Big Choice* is a marketing man's dream—fast and furious, but catchy enough not to alienate the pop crowd. Songs like "I Know You Well" and "A OK" bristle with churning guitars and pummeling drums, yet every rhythm is accompanied by a melodic vocal hook that softens the blow. Even on such loud, speedy cuts as "It's Not Over" and the title track, Face To Face sounds pleasantly familiar—sometimes too much so, as on "Promise," which features nearly the same riff and Green Day's "Basket Case."

face to face
BIG CHOICE

While Face To Face is clearly influenced by seminal punk bands like the Clash, the Ramones and Husker Du, its music is hardly as rebellious. Instead of aiming to separate itself from the mainstream as its forefathers did, the band, like Green Day and Offspring, seeks to integrate within the morass of pop culture. It's a "big choice" for new punks, but one which will likely be proven financially, if not necessarily artistically lucrative. **—JON WIEDERHORN**

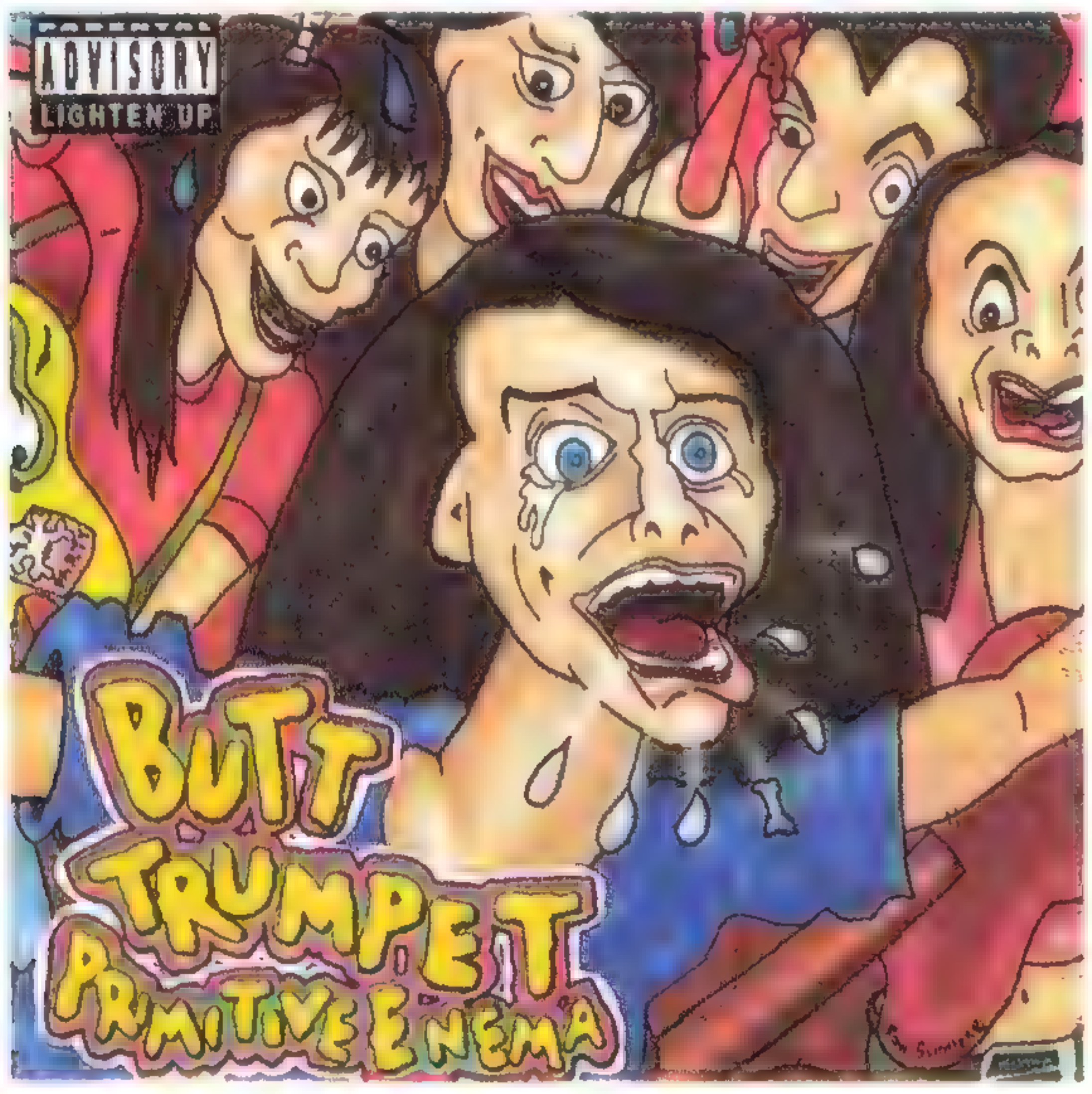
BUTT TRUMPET

Primitive Enema (Chrysalis)

***1/2

Yo, pass me that Grammy—I've got a winner in the category of "Album Most Likely To Piss Off Your Mom." Butt Trumpet's debut, *Primitive Enema*, offers 18 high energy, brutally offensive punk tracks with some of the most blatantly vulgar lyrics ever recorded. It's a fun-filled journey straight through the gutter.

The L.A. quintet (three of whom are female) sound a bit like Green Jellÿ, but with less theatrics and restraint. Nobody can possibly sing about dead dogs, anal sex and yeast infections and take themselves too seriously. The fact that we can't repeat most of the lyrics that lead vocalist Thom Bone caterwauls is ample proof that this is truly an exceptional album. Think about it—with tracks like "Funeral Crashing Tonight," "Ode To Dickhead" and "I've Been So Mad Lately," which is merely a string of obscenities with a backbeat, what's not to like?



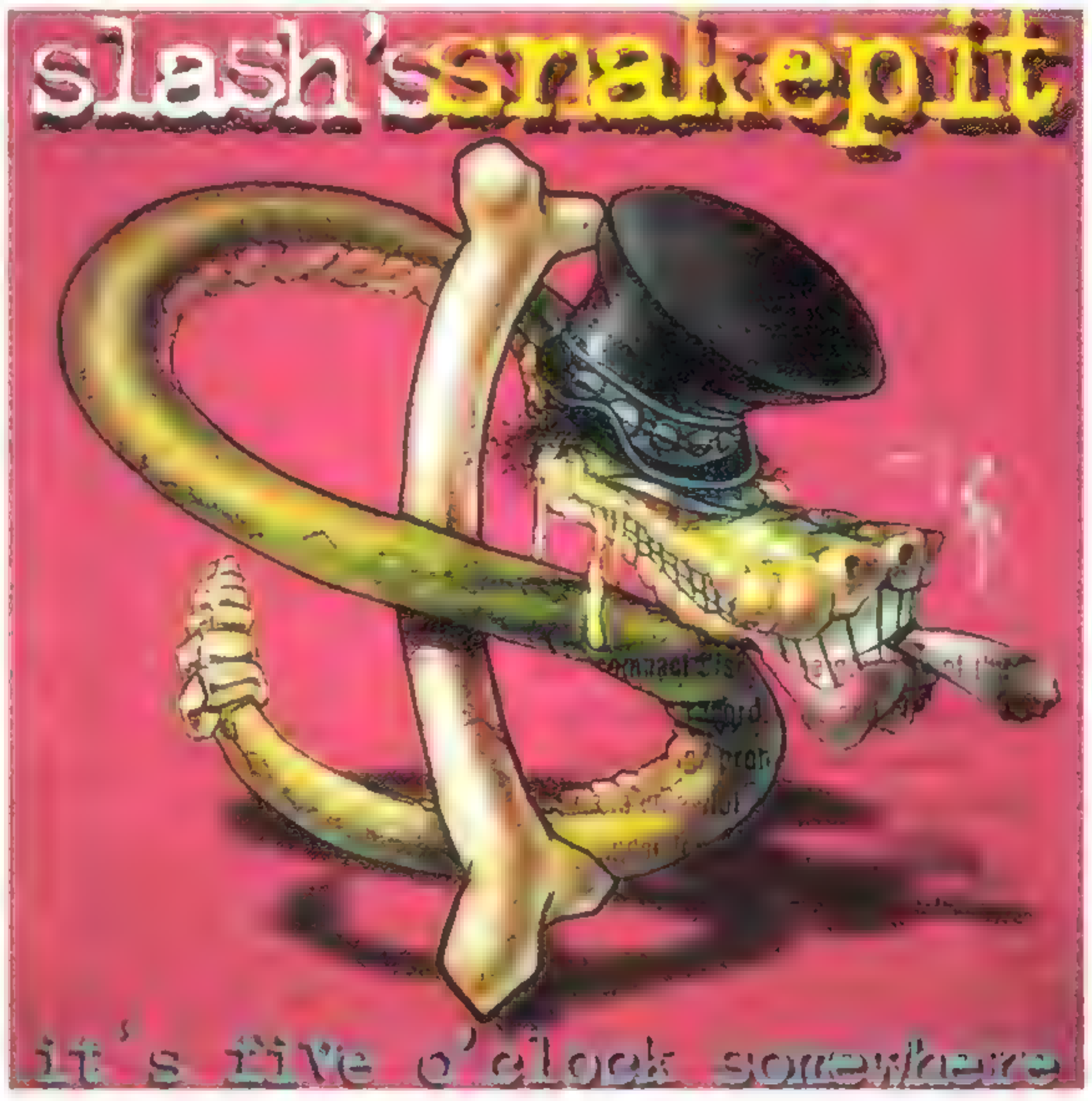
Guitarist Blare N. Bitch drops slabs of raw distorted guitar all over this disc, while Jerry Geronimo's drum work and the combined bass talents of Sharon Needles and Bianca Butthole make one of the heaviest bottom ends ever captured on tape. For a record that went from first take to final mix in roughly 72 hours, all the tracks sound surprisingly clean. And don't let the band's shock value fool you—this is a tight unit that can really thrash.

Primitive Enema features the rage and energy of classic punk with less gravity, more raunch and better production—it's anarchy with a smirk. **—DAN AMRICH**

SLASH'S SNAKEPIT

It's Five O'Clock Somewhere (Geffen)

*1/2



There's nothing lethal about the debut album from Slash's Snakepit—except the noise, that is. Recorded with a little help from some of Slash's buddies, like Guns N' Roses drummer Matt Sorum, former GN'R guitarist Gilby Clarke and Alice In Chains bassist Mike Inez, *It's Five O'Clock Somewhere*, the first solo outing by the hard-rockin' GN'R guitarist, sounds as though it was recorded at five in the morning after way, way too many beers. Sloppy to the point of dissolution, the record comes across as a bad rehearsal tape with songs that've been sitting on a GN'R reject list for years. Making matters even worse is the performance of vocalist Eric Dover (formerly the guitarist for L.A.'s Jellyfish). Dover sings like a graduate of the Eighties Hair-Band Vocal Institute. The real disappointment, though, is Slash, who plays like he couldn't give a rat's ass. Crap. **—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER**

THE ALKAHOLIKS

Coast II Coast (Loud)

***1/2

J-Ro, Tash and E-Swift, the three over-age delinquents that make up the Alkaholik crew, are back for round two. With rock-hard beats and lyrics that'll keep you grinnin', the 'Liks blow up on the successor to their stompin' '94 debut, 21 And Over. Cuts to check for include the pre-school bounce shotty, "WLIX," the futuristic "2,014," "All The Way Live" featuring the ominous Q-Tip (from A Tribe Called Quest) and of course, the lead single, "Daaam!" Bridging the regional gap in the Nine-Five with *Coast II Coast*, the Alkaholiks lead the hip-hop school to that ever effervescent "Next Level." **—TRACII McGREGOR**

STEVE VAI

Alien Love Secrets (Relativity)

***1/2

Steve Vai is the consummate rock chameleon. From his work with Frank Zappa to David Lee Roth to Whitesnake and his solo efforts, Vai knows how to shift gears without sacrificing his dedication to quality music. With *Alien Love Secrets*, Vai's new EP, we are not only reminded of just how diversified a player he is, but also how—through some swift instrument layering—intelligent a producer he's become.

Alien Love Secrets screams with a varied display of Vai's songwriting expertise. The quirky album opener, "Ya Yo Gack" (featuring son Julian on vocals) and "Juice," a raunchy Roth-like rocker, are both electrifying and intriguing pieces. On the flip side, "Die To Live," "The Boy From Seattle" and "Tender Surrender" offer a biting sense of passion. The eccentric "Kill The Guy With The Ball/The God Eaters" shows Vai's Zappa roots and warped imagination. But *Alien Love Secrets*' stand-out moment is "Bad Horsie," and all-out brawl between Steve and his axe...guess who wins. **—DAVID J. CRIBLEZ**

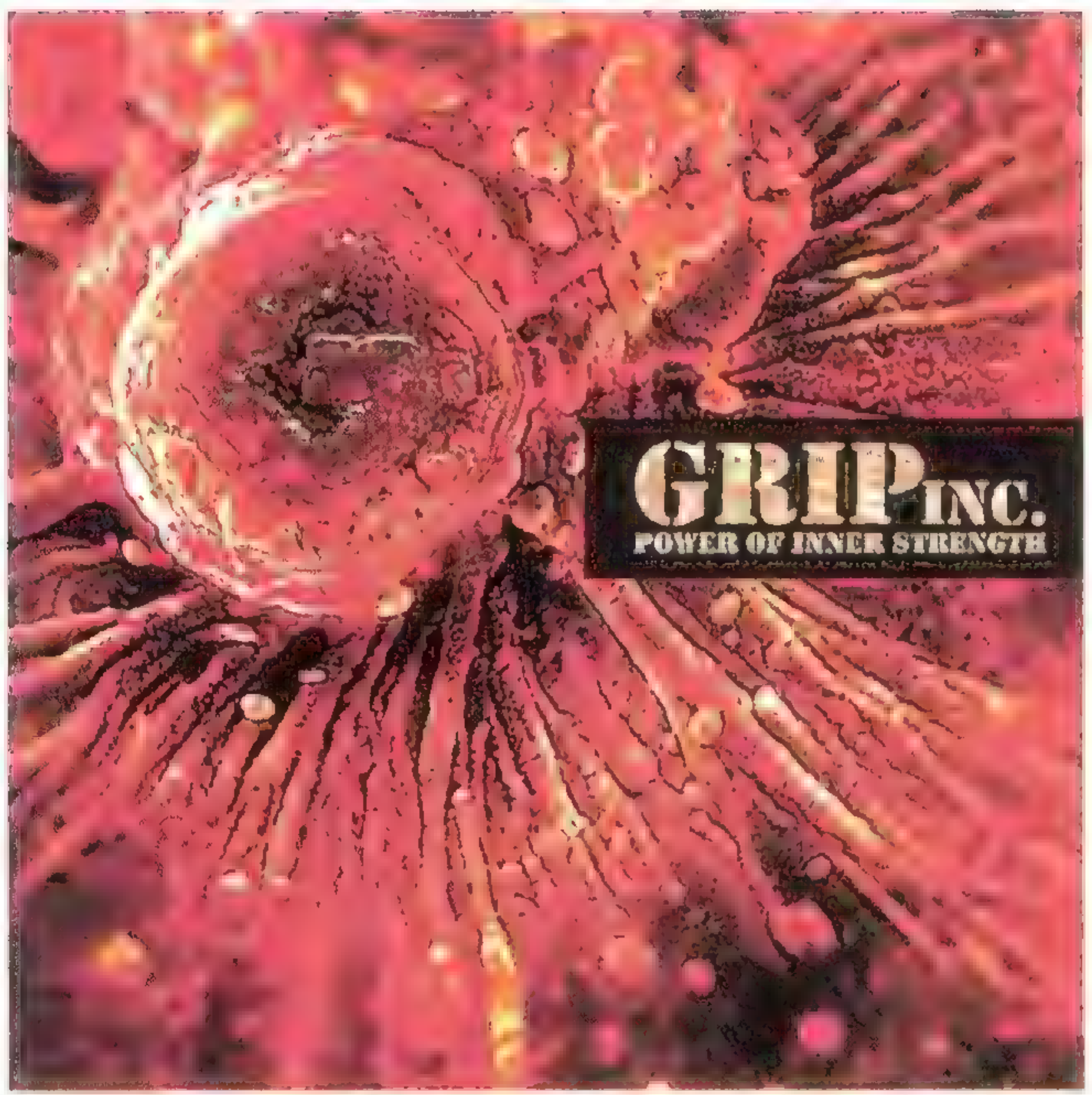
STEVE VAI
ALIEN LOVE SECRETS

GRIP INC.

Power Of Inner Strength(Metal Blade)

***

Former Slayer drummer Dave Lombardo makes his long-awaited return, and his new band Grip Inc. is a solid, intense outfit that's recorded a mostly impressive debut album.



Power Of Inner Strength kicks off with a Latino-flavored percussive intro, perhaps a nod to Lombardo's Cuban roots, before launching into the initial barrage of "Savage Seas" and "Hostage To Heaven." These tracks bear the closest resemblance to Lombardo's former band, especially the out-and-out thrash of "Hostage." From that point on, *Power Of Inner Strength* delves into moodier territory. "Colors Of Death" and "Guilty Of Innocence" slip somber, melodic interludes in between chunks of furious power metal and Lombardo's thunderous work behind the kit.

Lombardo's style remains as tasty and fluid as ever, although Grip Inc. requires less of the dazzling speed displayed on Slayer albums. Meanwhile, Gus Chambers delivers suitably intense vocals while guitarist Waldemar Sorychta is Lombardo's real find. Sorychta churns out a consistently catchy yet heavy collection of riffs, along with some more subdued passages that add color and range to the proceedings.

On the downside, not every song is as catchy as "Hostage" or the grooving "Ostracized," and the album's production occasionally sounds restrained, which lends it a certain amount of tension but also holds back a few potentially explosive moments. Still, Lombardo has plenty to be proud of. Wisely avoiding the temptation to tackle Slayer on their own turf, he and his band have nevertheless made an album that's fresher and more interesting than his previous group's latest effort. **—DON KAYE**

STEVE VAI
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gear box

Jurassic Park, Beavis & Butt-head, Star Wars and Star Trek—FLUX takes a look at the current crop of PC and Mac screen savers.

by Eric Griffith and Robert Sodaro

Screen savers used to be as simple as toasters with wings flying across your monitor whenever you left your computer idle for a few minutes. But those days are long gone. In addition to being a good way to protect your screen against burn-in problems, screen savers have also become one of the most popular forms of computer **entertainment.** And now that Hollywood's gotten involved in the screen saver craze, you can now see anything from **Star Wars** and **Star Trek** images to **Jurassic Park** and **T2** animations filling your screen. With that, FLUX has decided to check out some of the coolest and most popular screen savers so you can see which one is right for you.

BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD MULTIMEDIA SCREEN SAVER

(Sony Imagesoft)

BEAVIS AND BUTT-HEAD
SKULL

Beavis saves. Available on PC or floppy, **B&B** features tons of QuickTime movies taken directly from the show—animated QuickTime movies, stills and even complete videos (conveniently supplied by Sony-owned artists like Prong and Alice Cooper). The visuals are cool, but it doesn't sound like Mike Judge voiced all the speech samples.

THE SIMPSONS (Berkeley Systems)

DOH! Is there anything not to like about **The Simpsons**? The American family never looked worse on TV, and now that same dysfunctionality comes to your desktop. Watch Homer and Flanders mow their lawns dressed as chicks, hear Lisa play the sax while the air fills with images of characters from the show, even listen to the wisdom of Abraham "Grandpa" Simpson as he floats around your screen in his barcalounger spouting wise idioms like "My teeth hurt." You won't ever get much work done, but boy will you have a good time.

JURASSIC PARK (Asymetrix Corp.)

In this computer-draining CD-ROM saver, tiny T-Rexs chase jeeps across your screen, you can read character files from the movie and see lots of really bad animations. When you can't make a velociraptor hatching from an egg look smooth, you've got trouble—especially when your screen saver is based on a film that used computers to make everything seamless and realistic.

TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY

(Sound Source Unlimited)

If Arnold was to comment on this bit of Windows junk, he'd say, "I'll be lame." With the **T2** screen saver, you can see little animations of Arnold and the T-1000 as they morph into icons, blow holes in the desktop, time travel onto the desktop, and get built in a little factory like puzzle pieces. Big deal. It's remotely interesting and somewhat useful to see the Skynet World Clock give the time in major cities around the world, as is viewing the various parts that make up a Cyberdyne Systems T-800 terminator. But aside from that, this collection deserves a big, "Hasta la vista, baby."

STAR WARS SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT

(LucasArts)

Watch from the window of a distant ship as TIE Fighters and X-Wings engage in battle, read stats and info on various ships and characters, check out original movie storyboards, and see Vader and Ben Kenobi clash light sabers. Best of all, watch as tiny Jawas remove and rearrange your icons.

MARVEL SCREEN POSTERS

(Berkley Systems)

A cool saver for comic fans, but one that really doesn't show much ingenuity, **Marvel Screen Posters** basically just swaps various static images of Marvel character, including Captain America, the Hulk, Spidey and even classic Marvel comic covers (**FF#1**). Perhaps the coolest thing here is the option of "postering" an image behind your on-screen windows to form a desktop backdrop to your monitor.

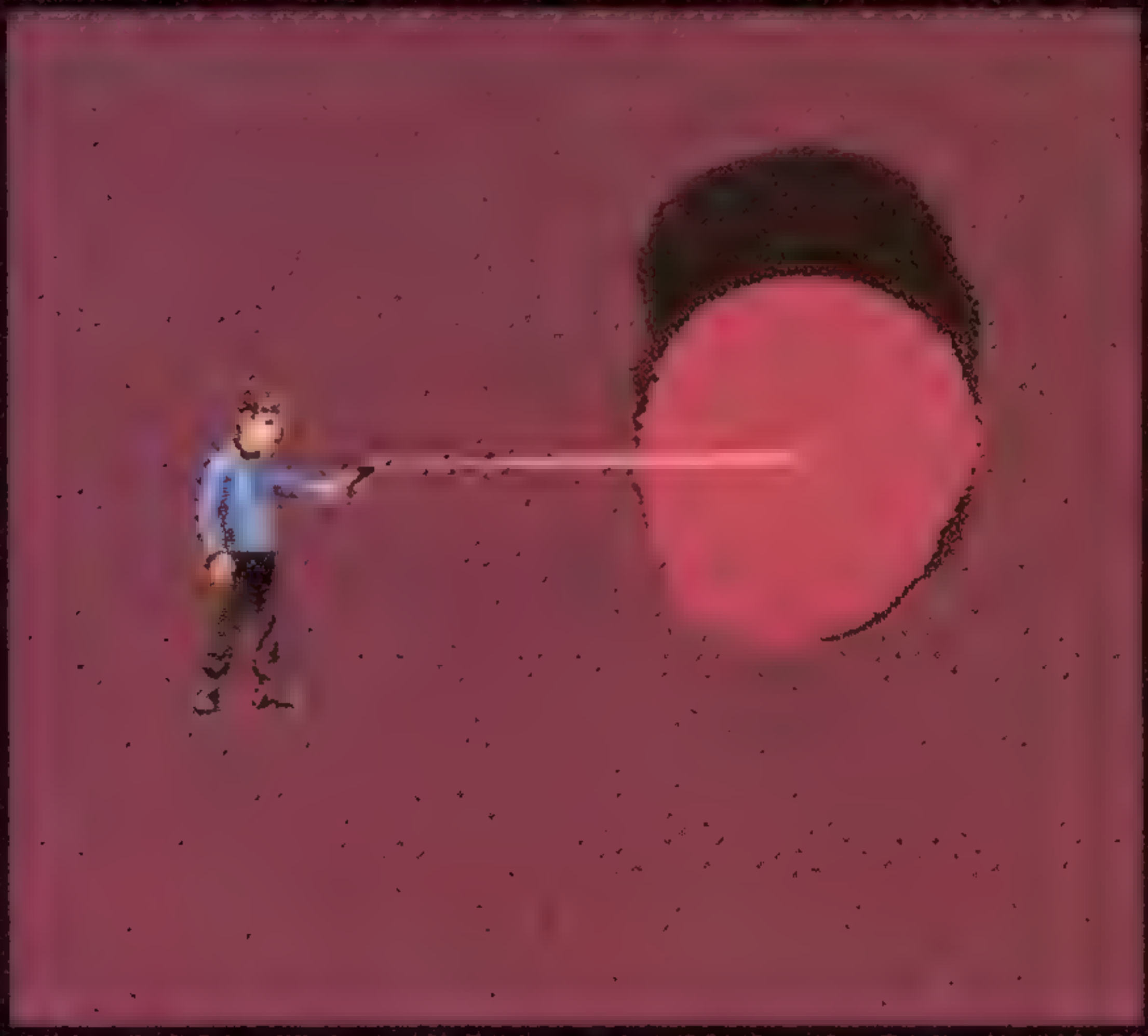
X-MEN SCREEN SAVER

(Berkeley Systems)

Thrill to full-blown animation as Magneto commands control of your screen, either attracting or repelling objects; Wolverine and/or Bishop shred your desktop; or just sit back and oggle the X-Babes as they fly across your monitor in all their head-turning glory. Totally cool.

STAR TREK (Berkeley Systems)

No other saver manages to evoke the look, feel and persona of its inspiration—probably because the show was just hokey enough that these modules seem high tech. Space parasites (the kind that sucked on Spock's spine) stick to the inside of your monitor screen; see James Tiberius Kirk contemplate the universe from his seat on the bridge; follow Spock on an aimless wander around your desktop and watch as the Enterprise is trapped in the intricate energy net called the Tholian Web. You can even play a round of Trek trivia (standard in all Trek savers). Not overly entertaining, but worth a quick stare.



STAR TREK SCREEN POSTERS

(Berkeley Systems)

A collection of still images from the first six **Star Trek** films that don't really do anything. None are overly dramatic or fantastic, with most of the images consisting of the Enterprise and the crew's "borrowed" Klingon Bird of Prey in various shots, with a few of the crew and bad guys (like Kahn) and even the films' movie theater posters.

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

(Berkeley Systems)

The show that out-did the original doesn't quite beat out its predecessor in the screen saver category. Here, the crew of the Enterprise-D mimic much of what has gone on before in other Trek screen savers—a tiny Worf runs around swinging a Klingon Bat'leth, Borg "assimilate" your desktop (like Spock wandering in the original), and 24th-century ships float around a space station (mimicking the ships gathering in space in the original saver). Check out Lt. Commander Data's dancing lessons or watch the lovely ship's counselor, Deanna Troi float about the screen and giving advice.

gear box

VIRTUAL GUITAR

(Ahead, Inc.)

Okay, we'll be the first to admit it: Ahead's Virtual Guitar looks like a pretty ridiculous computer product. What could be more embarrassing than sitting in front of your PC and strumming on that bright purple ax while some rocker wannabes on the screen tell you how much you suck? At least, that's what the FLUX staff first thought when the Virtual Guitar arrived at our doorstep. But once we plugged that sucker into the office PC (you need a 486 or better with 2X CD-ROM drive), our worst fears were confirmed: the Virtual Guitar was actually a heckuva lot of fun! With the "Welcome To West Feedback" pack-in disc, we got to jam along with such cool tunes as Pantera's "Five Minutes Alone" and the Gin Blossoms' "Hey Jealousy" while trying to get our band into the club circuit. We took some heavy criticism from our on-screen bandmates and were often sent back to the garage to practice, but despite being made to feel like total morons, we still had a blast. Then we popped in the "Quest For Fame" disc (a separate $79.95 program) and got to jam live in concert with Aerosmith! That's right, Aerosmith. No actors, no cardboard cut outs, no crappy video footage. And if that wasn't enough, the Virtual Guitar requires that you know absolutely nothing about guitar. Good timing and a steady picking hand are all you'll need and the computer will do the rest. Before long you'll be just as we were—looking pretty silly, but having a damn good time. $99.95 —JEFF KITTS

ATARI 2600 ACTION PACK FOR WINDOWS

(Activision)

Now that you've got that double-speed CD-ROM for your PC, Virtual Reality glasses and texture-mapped, motion-capture combat, you think you're fully prepared to enter the next level of gaming. So what's next, you ask yourself? Why, nostalgia, of course. That's right—the past, jack. All those blocky, chunky, buzzing games you played on your Atari 2600 until your eyes watered and your calluses got calluses are now available for your PC. With this classic—almost Jurassic—Windows compilation, you can gleefully waste your high-end graphics and sound capabilities on such Activision staples as **Kaboom!, River Raid, Chopper Command, Spider Fighter, Grand Prix, Boxing, Cosmic Commuter, Crackpots, Fishing Derby, Freeway, Frostbite, H.E.R.O., Seaquest, Sky Jinks** and, of course, **Pitfall!** Billed as "the first in a series of classic video game compilations," the Action Pack seems to be only the spearhead of a video-relic resurgence. Step aside, **Myst, Under A Killing Moon** and **The 11th Hour**...here comes **Tank Battle**!
—CHRIS HUDAK

PHOENIX: THE FALL AND RISE OF HOME VIDEOGAMES

By Leonard Herman (Rolenta Press)

Leonard Herman's new book, **Phoenix**, traces video games from their first appearance at a government research lab (yes, Uncle Sam unwittingly paid for a **Pong** prototype) straight through the Crash of '84 and onto the current wars between Nintendo, Sega, Atari and 3DO. The book could have used an editor and a fact-checker, but it's still one of the only books out that even attempts to summarize the history of home gaming. Warts and all, it's a good read. 310 Pages, $19.99. **Rolenta Press, P.O. Box 3814, Union NJ 07083-1891** —DAN AMRICH

FLIGHTSTICK PRO 3DO

(CH Products)

Tired of playing 3DO games with that piddly little 3-button control pad? Need a man-sized joystick to wrap your itchy trigger fingers around? If so, then CH Products' Flightstick Pro for the 3DO might just be the joystick of your dreams. As the first joystick available for the 3DO, the Flightstick Pro is a superbly-crafted product. With a four-way viewing switch, three fire buttons, four push buttons and a throttle control all wrapped in a firm and comfortable grip, the Flightstick Pro is exactly what the doctor ordered for such games as **VR Stalker, Return Fire, Super Wing Commander** and **The Need For Speed**. But all this doesn't come cheap. The Flightstick Pro 3DO retails for about $129.95. —JK

GODZILLA TOY LINE

(Trendmasters, Inc.)

With a new Godzilla movie currently in production (set for release next year with an insane budget of over $100 million!), Trendmasters is preparing for America to go stark raving mad over the all-time king of the monster flicks by releasing a massive Godzilla toy line. Everything from sports bottles, key rings and pencil toppers to 6" electronic action figures (including 'Zilla, Mothra, Ghidorah, Mecha-Ghidorah, Mecha-Godzilla and Rodan), the incredibly impresive 8" "Stomp n' Roar" Godzilla and a fully-poseable 10" Godzilla with working "breath attack" and electronic roar. Playsets, figures, plush toys, wind-ups, water-squirting 6" figures, jump-ups, banks, slide puzzles, water-activated growing pods, self-inflating toys and some of the best working figures in toy history—you name it, and it's sure to have Godzilla's ugly mug plastered all over it.
—JK

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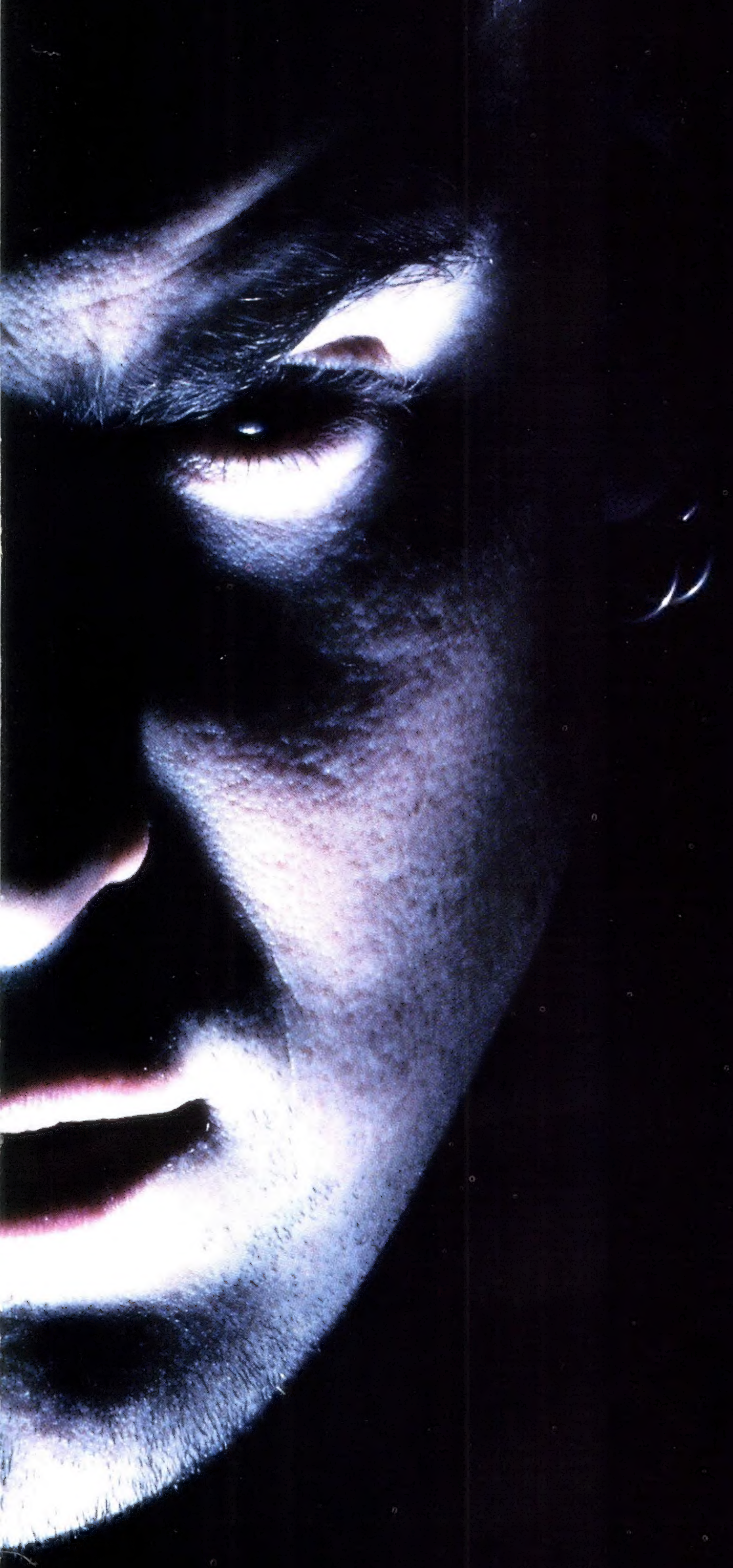

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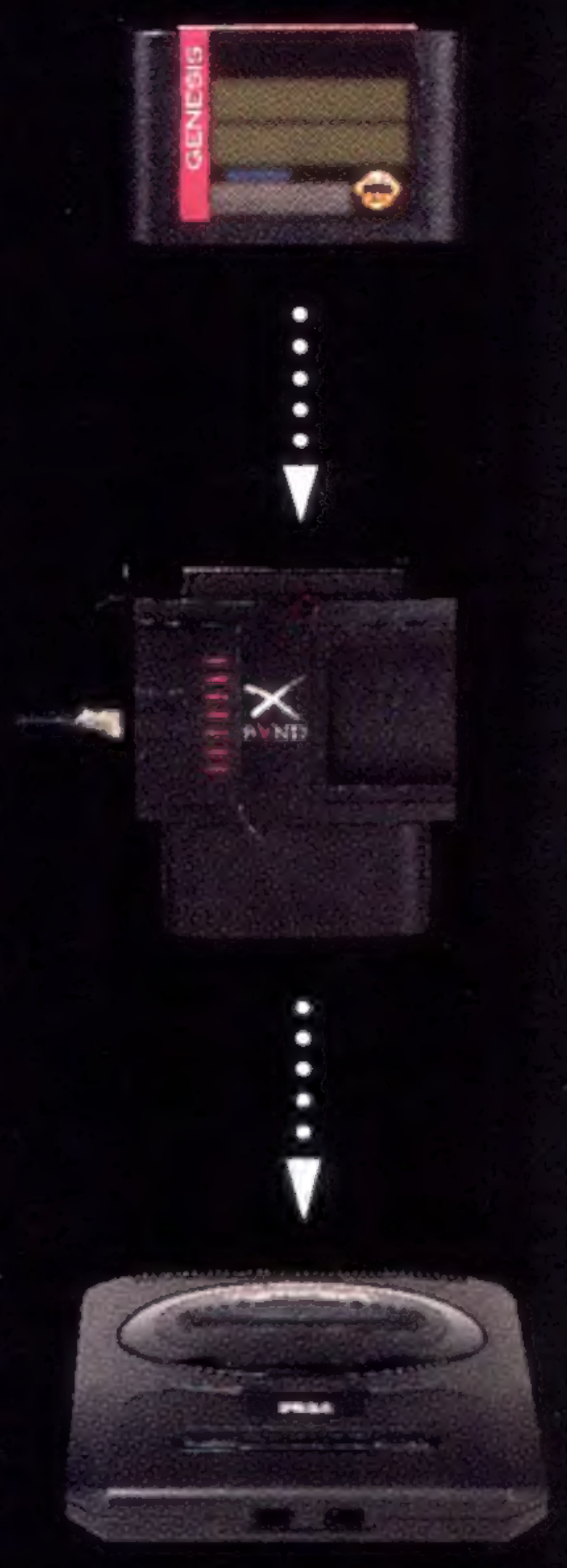

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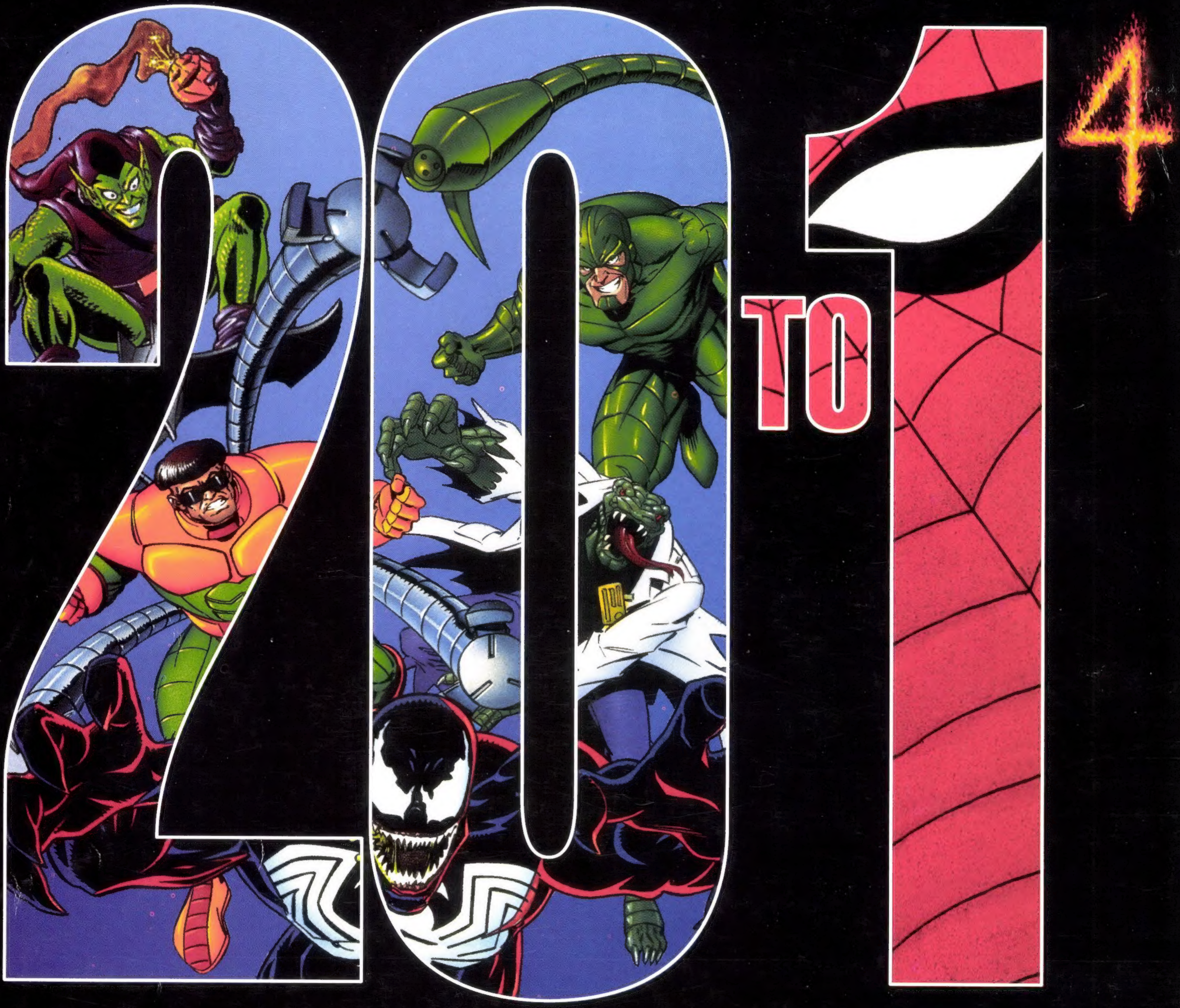

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